

Strauss: I have devoted each seminar to a single text, and to each text in its entirety. For some dubious reasons, I have decided for the first time to deviate from that and to take two texts and not to read either of them in its entirety. The two texts are Hobbes' Leviathan and De cive, or in English, Of the Citizen. We shall read only the first part, the non-theoretical half of the Leviathan, and only those sections of De cive which you find in the English translation. This edition of the English translation is incomplete. In addition, I propose that we study one recent book on Hobbes by MacPherson. Can you read the title?

Reader: The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism - Hobbes to Locke.

Strauss: We have 16 sessions and 15 papers. The next time there will be a paper on MacPherson's introduction. Then we turn to the prefatory material in Hobbes in both De cive and the Leviathan.

4th meeting: Leviathan, chapters 1-4.  
 5th meeting: Leviathan, chapters 5-8.  
 6th meeting: Leviathan, chapters 9-12.  
 7th meeting: De cive, 1 & 2; Leviathan, 13 & 14.  
 8th meeting: De cive, 3; Leviathan, 15 & 16; MacPherson, 46-87.  
 9th meeting: De cive, 5 & 6; Leviathan, 17 & 18.  
 10th meeting: De cive, 7-10; Leviathan, 19 & 20.  
 11th meeting: Leviathan, 21-24; MacPherson, 87-106.  
 12th meeting: De cive, 12; Leviathan, 29.  
 13th meeting: De cive, 13; Leviathan, 30-31.  
 14th meeting: De cive, 14; Leviathan, 25-28.  
 15th meeting: MacPherson, 170-193.  
 16th meeting: MacPherson, 194-262 & 279-292.

The quantitative character of each is not entirely equal, but this is not a serious consideration.

Now we make one assumption today, which we may bring up on the appropriate occasion--namely, that the study of the classics of political philosophy is a reasonable thing to do, or what is ordinarily called the history of political philosophy. Now when studying political philosophy or rather the great political philosophers, we are confronted with this alternative--namely, that in the first place all these great writers present to us fundamentally the same eternal alternative an answers to the same eternal questions throughout the ages. So there are certain fundamental possibilities of understanding political life and they are constantly repeated with secondary qualifications, or that radical changes have taken place regarding the very questions

so that the questions which say Hobbes tries to answer is not the question which Plato or Aristotle tried to answer. Now which of these two views is the sound view? Now if you take a position which was quite common in former times and you still find traces of in the literature where you have roughly--I will give you an example. (Professor Strauss is now illustrating on the blackboard.) You have Hobbes and his relation to the Germans and to Kant and Hegel, and this is the same as that of the Sophists to Plato and Aristotle. So Plato, Kant, and Hegel do the same in regard to Hobbes as they might have done in regard to the Sophists. In other words, the fundamental alternative is the same.

It is also undeniable that there is something which we can call a family kinship among all modern thinkers, so that Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Hegel, and who have you, in spite of all their opposition, have an X in common which distinguishes them all from the Sophists, as well as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Thomas Aquinas, or any other pre-modern political thinker.

Prior to investigation we simply do not know which of these two alternatives are sketched--all political philosophers answer the same eternal questions, or that there are radically new fundamental questions. But there is some element of truth in both. Now I consider for the rest the implications of the second hypothesis, namely that there is a fundamental difference between the modern thinkers and the pre-modern thinkers. If this is so, there must have been a break with the pre-modern ways of thinking at some time, somewhere. Now where did this break occur?

X Hobbes? The most cautious picture would seem to be this. We look around and where do we find a thinker who says that something was fundamentally wrong with all preceding political thought and we must make an entirely new beginning. We take our burden first by the self-conscious method of the actor (here in this case the actors are thinkers). Now if we accept this, there can only be one answer. The man who accepted the break was Hobbes. Hobbes was the one who said time and again that everything done hitherto was wrong and that we must make a fresh start.

The mere claim to absolute novelty is something very different. For example, you find such a claim made by (inaudible) in his Monarchy that no one has ever tried that before what he is doing in his Monarchy. But if you go on and read it, you will see that the authority for (inaudible) philosophically is always Aristotle. So, however different the Monarchy may be from Aristotle's teachings, as far as the political details are concerned the principles are the Aristotelian principles.

Machiavelli raises a claim comparable to Hobbes in his Prince, Chapter 15. In the first place, it is stated much more weakly than by Hobbes, and secondly, Machiavelli has written another book, a much larger book than the Prince, in which no such claim

is apparently raised. One could easily go through all these men of the 16th century and one would see, that compared with the definiteness of Hobbes' claim, there is no (inaudible).

Now if Hobbes intended to achieve such a radical break and in a way achieved it, why? Why was he dissatisfied with the tradition. Naturally we have to find out. We have also to be a bit more careful and say what is the tradition. For example, according to this schema which I presented there, we have something which is called the Sophists and then Socrates and his two great pupils, Plato and Aristotle--two entirely different traditions. If this is so, there were two traditions. I will only assert now that this was not the case according to Hobbes. X/For Hobbes there was only one tradition, the tradition stemming from Socrates.

Then we have to study Hobbes, and in the first place his intentions--what is he after, what did he find fault with, and how did he intend to go about the repair of this. Here we are confronted with a difficulty which is rare and perhaps unique. This is that we are confronted with a variety of works by Hobbes, regarding the value of each we have no authoritative guidance from Hobbes himself. In the case of Plato, we have at first glance two political works, the Republic and the Laws, but it appears perfectly clearly from the text that the Republic is meant to be the higher book than the Laws. The Laws give us something secondary. When you take Machiavelli, who also presented his thinking in two books, the Prince and the Discourses, he makes it very clear that the Prince is the principality and the Discourses is its republic. Now this is not quite so simple; it's quite true, but at first glance this is the guidance. There exists no utterance of Hobbes about the three versions of his political philosophy. Hobbes tried successively to present identically the same political treatment. \*The three presentations differ from each other, but he didn't tell us which is the most authoritative version.

I will mention these three because these will come up time and again. The first version which we shall not use and for no better reason than that you can't find it--it is out of print--that is the Elements of Law, Natural and Political. The second is Of the Citizen. This is 1642 in Latin, but it has been translated allegedly by Hobbes. And then of course his most famous is the Leviathan, 1651, of which there was another version. These are very interesting dates in English history: Civil War, Cromwell, after the Restoration and the Great Fire, and the Plague. These facts are of some interest.

This is however not the whole story. If you look at the table of contents of the Leviathan and De cive, you would see that these books have very different subject matter. What we can rudely call psychology forms the first part of the Leviathan and this does not exist in De cive, but it exists only in the Elements. The Elements and the Leviathan have the same or roughly the same form. But the Citizen was meant to be from the

very beginning at the first part of what one could call the system of philosophy, what we call the principles of philosophy.

Now this work was supposed to consist of three parts: the first on the body, the second on man, *de hominum*, and then the citizen. *De hominum* consists of two parts; the first part deals with objects; the second part deals with the first chapters of the Leviathan or the corresponding chapters of the Elements. So we would have to add to our listing the second part of *de hominum* if we want to have all the elements regarding Hobbes' political philosophy.

To repeat, there is no certain (inaudible) which of these versions is the best version. One could say the latest version would have the most mature statements. But this is not quite factual because the latest version would be the Latin translation of the Leviathan, which is much shorter than the English version, and the reason is that the English version of the Leviathan was edited and published in 1651, i.e., under Cromwell, i.e., when the Elizabethan heresy laws had been abolished, whereas after the Restoration in 1660, there was some limitation on freedom of speech, and Hobbes being always the loyal subject adapted himself to this situation. Also, if you go over the very earliest presentation, the Elements of Law, quite a few things which are wonderfully clear are absent from the later version.

In one way, the Citizen is the most authoritative simply because it is written in Latin. The Citizen is much more strict and concise than the Leviathan, but the Leviathan on the other hand contains much more material, subject matter, than the two earlier versions do. A second thing--one must study all the versions of Hobbes' philosophy, and only external reasons, as the unavailability of the Leviathan, and the fact that most of us don't read Latin, so we can't compare these two versions of the Leviathan, are the reasons why we limit ourselves to the Citizen and the English version of the Leviathan.

I ask you to look at the table of contents of De cive and the Leviathan to get a provisional notion of what this is all about. The Citizen begins with the 13th chapter of the Leviathan. The first 12 chapters of the Leviathan have no correspondence in De cive. Now this invites a very grave question, namely the range of political science or political philosophy. The first chapters of the Leviathan may be called psychology. Does psychology belong to political science or not? The Citizen says no and the Leviathan says yes. But it means more than that. De cive was the third part of Hobbes' (inaudible) of philosophic work, the principles of philosophy. But it was published prior to the first two parts. The other parts were published only in 1655 and 1658 respectively. This was published already in 1642. Hobbes gave this reason. This third part is perfectly intelligible by itself, without the psychological and logical parts which preceded it.



This much in order to explain why we read two different versions.

I have to say a few more things, but before I do that, I would like to know if you have any questions, because these facts are quite well known to people who have studied Hobbes, but they may be a bit confusing for those who haven't studied Hobbes.

Student: What about Hobbes' translation of Thucydides?

Strauss: The date of publication was 1628, but he wrote it if I remember well around 1620. I could add this point indeed, because Hobbes' first work of which we know was the translation of Thucydides. There is one thing very strange about Hobbes. For a man of his intellectual power, his power showed itself very late. His earliest book was completed when he was 50 or more--52-- and there is barely anything in existence of what Hobbes did before. Surely there is the translation of Thucydides, but it is a translation--it contains an introduction which is not in any way profound. Some minor things are known, but there is practically nothing. He developed very slow and very late. He grew of course very old. He was almost 90 when he died, and one of his last works was the translation of Homer. By the way, among the other writings (for those especially of legal training) should be read his dialogue between a lawyer and a philosopher; it is not very long, about 150 pages, and that is a very clear statement of his position as it would be stated in a discussion with a lawyer. I think it should be reprinted; it is not now available.

Student: (Inaudible) Plato and Aristotle . . . two books . . .

Strauss: What I said was this. In the case of Plato we have authoritative guidance. In Hobbes we have no guidance whatever. Take some other cases to show how rare that is. In the case of Locke, everyone knows it is Civil Government. In the case of Rousseau, the book is the Contract. The Leviathan is much more famous, especially in the English-speaking countries, but this has to do with the fact that it is written in this marvelous English, and Hobbes' latin is not comparable to latin as his english is to english.

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: In Hobbes' case, the reason is only that for one reason or another he was dissatisfied with his version. We have to find out why he could have been dissatisfied with De cive and why he wrote the Leviathan in addition. Political reasons may have played a certain role. The Leviathan was also meant to appease the conscience of the English gentlemen who felt they owed loyalty to the decapitated Charles I. Many of these still felt that the divine right of kings was a right which could not be done away with by any act of rebellion, and Hobbes coaches them beautifully that since they are no longer protected by Charles, but by Cromwell, they owe obedience to Cromwell. But this doesn't explain why he wrote the whole book.

One reason is surely clear. Half of the Leviathan is devoted to theoretical questions including of course church government. Now this subject is treated with much more discomfort in the Citizen, and Hobbes wanted obviously to use this marvelous opportunity given by Cromwell's liberalism in this respect to present his own teaching about revelations. But this doesn't explain other things--why he repeated the political teachings and psychological teachings.

Student: Could you tell us why you decided to make the Leviathan first, rather than De cive.

Strauss: Oh, because the Leviathan begins with the subject matter (inaudible).

Student: Would you like to say something about Behemoth?

Strauss: Behemoth is a much less interesting book, and less important book. Behemoth is of course the parallel to Leviathan, the two mythical annals of the Old Testament. The Leviathan contains the political teaching proper. Behemoth presents the pathology of the English commonwealth, i.e., a critical history of the English Revolution, in other words the civil war in England. But it is not a systematic presentation of Hobbes' teachings.

The longevity of Hobbes has perhaps something to do with the fact that he had so many; if he had died after the (inaudible), we wouldn't have had the Leviathan. So lack of occupation can also be mentioned as a minor factor.

Hobbes was sure that he was effecting a break with the whole previous political philosophy. In what did Hobbes see his originality. In other words, what is Hobbes' characteristic intention?

Since we shall discuss it a week from today, I am going to read to you the preface or rather the episto-dedicatory to the Elements of Law.

"From the two principle parts of our nature, reason and passion, have proceeded two kinds of learning, mathetmatical and dogmatic. The former is free from controversies and disputes because it consists in comparing figures and motions only in which things truth and the interests of men oppose not each other, but in the latter there is nothing not disputable because it compares men and methods with their rights and property, in which (inaudible) as reason is against man, so (inaudible) will a man be against reason, and from hence it cometh that they who have written against justice and policy in general do all invade each other, and themselves with contradictions, and all previous doctrines of justice and policy (inaudible). To reduce this doctrine to the rules and infallibility of reason /in other words, to raise political science to the level of mathematics/ there is no way but first

to put such principles down for a foundation, as passion, not mistrusting, may not seek to display."

I believe the double negative here has no ordinary meaning, but means such principles as passion will not mistrust and therefore will not seek to display.

"...and afterward to build thereon on these foundations the truth of cases in the law of nations which hitherto has been built in the air by ambiguity."

I think that is all that we need, but this is already the Hobbes we know, whereas if you would read the introduction to De cive, it would not (inaudible). Now let us see what this says. One thing we learn here--political science is the doctrine of justice and policy, and that is proven later on when Hobbes speaks of the law of nature as a matter of course. This remains unchanged. Hobbes is as much a teacher of the law of nature as Thomas Aquinas. But a new manner of handling it, and this new manner of handling it is absolutely decided, because hitherto the whole thing has been up in the air and now we see a solid foundation.

These are the first indications which we get. Mathematics is in one way or other--we do not yet know in which way--the (inaudible). That was the great argument throughout the 17th century, with Descartes especially, that mathematics is the only science which we have, and the chaotic situation or other things is due to the fact that men have not done the same that the mathematicians have done. I don't have to tell you that this is going on since Descartes for every generation up to the present day.

But that is not the suggestion which Hobbes makes in this statement regarding the kind of principles which must be laid down. Principles which are not destroyed by passion and therefore passion must not seek to display them. In other words, the doctrine must be in harmony with passion, which implies that the traditional doctrine was not in harmony; it laid down foundations which were destroyed by passion, and therefore passion rebelled against them; i.e., the doctrine was not effective, because it did not make proper allowance for the power of passion.

This thought in itself has a certain modern pre-history which we have to take into consideration. Now let me use a pair of expressions which we shouldn't use at all, but only today very gently, and these are the terms idealistic and realistic. Let us very loosely say that a doctrine which disregards passion is an idealistic doctrine, and a doctrine which takes the passion seriously is a realistic doctrine. More than a century prior to Hobbes, Machiavelli has said in the Prince, Chapter 15, that the previous men who had written on political matters had described imaginary commonwealths, and the reason was because they took their bearings by how many ought to be, and what Machiavelli is going to do is not to speak about

imaginary commonwealths, but commonwealths which are or at least can be, and he will bring this about by studying how men do live in contradistinction to the manner in which they ought to live. This is of capital importance for everything which follows later and this is of course implied here.

Hobbes, if I remember well, never mentions Machiavelli, but we do know from Hobbes' biography, that when he was a young man he knew Francis Bacon quite well and Bacon used him as a kind of glorified secretary for some time, and Bacon had adopted this Machiavellian point, that one must consider men as they already are and not have this limited approach and that is a characteristic of the tradition to study men as they ought to be.

We should consider for one moment this question of the passions. In order to understand this remark of Hobbes about passion, and its importance for the true doctrine of natural law, let us compare it with a corresponding remark of Thomas Aquinas about natural law. In the first of the second part, section 94, article 2, we find this: "Since good has the nature of an end and evil the nature of the contrary meaning not end, hence it is also that things to which man has a natural inclination, naturally apprehended by reason of being good and consequently as objects of dispute, and the contrary is evil and objects of avoidance. Therefore, the order of the precepts of natural law is according to the order of the natural inclinations. For there is in man first of all an inclination toward good in accordance with the nature which he has in common with all substance inasmuch as every substance seeks the preservation of his own being according to its nature, and by reason of this inclination, whatever is the means of preserving human life and avoiding obstacles belongs to the natural law. Secondly, there is in man an inclination to think that they pertain to him more especially, according to that nature which he has in common with other animals, and in virtue of this inclination those things are said to belong to the natural law which nature has taught to all animals, such as sexual intercourse, the education of offspring, and so forth. Thirdly, there is in man the inclination to do good according to his reason which nature is proper to him. Man has a natural inclination to know the truth about God and to live in society, and in this respect whatever pertains to this inclination belongs to the natural law, for example, to shun ignorance, to avoid offending those among whom one has to live, and other such things regarding the above inclinations."

So you see Thomas speaks here about man's natural inclinations as that with a view to which we can discover the truth about the natural law. These natural inclinations are not necessarily conscious as shown by the fact that inanimate things are not supposed to have natural inclinations, and surely plants have natural inclinations.

But one also has to consider for example the beginning of Aristotle's Metaphysics that all men by nature desire to know, as is shown even by vulgar curiosity. Now vulgar curiosity is a kind of (inaudible) form of the desire to know, and therefore a man who is only curious has the natural inclination only in a perverted form, and he is not aware of what the natural inclination is. So consciousness is not essential to natural inclinations.

What is the relation of passion and natural inclinations? I give you now only some references; we cannot read all of these. For example, if you would read in Thomas' Summa, Part 1, question 60, articles 1 and 2, you would see that passions are secondary compared with the natural inclinations. The passions may or may not follow natural inclinations. There are passions which counter the natural inclinations; others which follow them. But passions are surely secondary compared to natural inclinations. Passions are not as such bad.

In the first part of the second part, question 24, articles 2 and 3, Thomas discusses this at some length, contrary to a certain view that passions must be extricated because passions are as such bad--seemingly the stoic view.

In question 22, article 1, Thomas gives a more expansive description of the meaning of passion because passion means of course any being (inaudible) passion as opposed to action. To take an example, an eclipse of the moon is a passion of the moon. But if we take the precise and narrow meaning of passion, then we understand something which lowered the being. If a being is protected by something else, in the wider, what we can call the entological sense of passion, it is of course a passion. If you are taught to undergo a change, it is a passion, but this would never be called a passion, because you are improved by it. By passions he means such things that act or are being acted upon which lower. To this extent, this is a corrected meaning of passion.

The natural inclinations direct man toward the perfection of his being; the passions do not. Some of them properly regulated can be helpful towards perfection, but not passion. To state it more simply, but also more loosely, what is behind the notion of passion is this. The enjoyment that accompanies man's being in his own or coming into his own differs essentially from the enjoyment and grief which disturb him or contract him. And when we speak of passions in a more precise sense, we mean the latter, the enjoyment of grief which disturb man or contract. And by contract we mean for example hatred which is not necessarily disturbing, a cold hatred.

Let us then provisionally say that Hobbes in his overall orientation replaces perfection by passion, and the reason is because he implicitly denies natural inclinations. There are no natural inclinations.

I take you now to a later paper because this point comes out very clearly, and that is John Locke--a few passages from the essay on human understanding. The perfection of man was toward, at least in the time of Aristotle, happiness. Now what is happiness according to Locke? Happiness in its full extent is the utmost pleasure that we are capable of, and misery the utmost pain, and the lowest degree of what can be called happiness is so much ease from all pain and so much (inaudible) from pleasure that without which anyone cannot be content. So happiness is the utmost pleasure we are capable of.

But what is pleasure? I have to read you only a chapter heading: pleasure and pain, simple idea. Pleasure is an idea; happiness is also an idea. That is something very different from what we understand by happiness, and what also Aristotle said. Locke's most famous doctrine is that there are no innate ideas and all human pain are (inaudible). There are no natural constitutions of man; there are no natural inclinations. There are no natural inclinations because pleasure and pain are, and also called desire and aversion, ideas.

Now we have to find out of course whether Hobbes goes so far as Locke does, but Hobbes is surely moving in that direction. You must have heard the expression: stimuli and responses. If you take this very literally, it means the only things to consider in such a situation is the stimulus, a ray of light or a piece of candy, and the response, but that takes responding beings who should have a structure in themselves which you have to know in order to understand the response and which can under these conditions be forgotten.

Now when you speak of pleasure and pain and idea, then you are on the way to this kind of psychology. But you have to keep in mind this question of passion and natural inclination, and the question whether pleasure and pain are ideas. I think I can say from recollection that Hobbes does not say that pleasures and pains are ideas. To that extent, he is somewhat old-fashioned compared to Locke.

Let me say a few words about Hobbes' substantive notion of passion. This is quite strange, and I will not have a ready parallel to that. I will read you a few passages again from the Elements of Law. Part 1, chapter 7. "There are two sorts of pleasure. Of the one seems to affect the corporeal organ of (inaudible), and that I call (inaudible). The greatest whereof is that by which we are invited to give continuance (inaudible), and the next (inaudible) of man is invited to meet for the preservation of this individual person." These are the subjects which are treated by Thomas in the context of natural inclinations, not pleasure. "The other sort of delight is not particular to any part of the body. It is called the delight of the mind. It is that which we call joy. Likewise of pain, some affects the body, and I therefore call

the pain of the body, and some not, and those are called grief."

At the end of the next chapter: "In the pleasure men have or give pleasure from the sign of honor or dishonor done unto them comes this the nature of the passions in particular whereof we are to speak in the next chapter." Now this somewhat dark sentence with the inclusion of "in particular" can be clarified. There is no question that Hobbes means that passion, all passion, has to do with the pleasure or displeasure from the signs of honor or dishonor done to him. So that, for example, pleasure or pain caused by bodily hurt or by bodily pleasure is not a passion. Nor the desire for them as such, but some worth or satisfaction of honor. That alone is passion.

(The tape was changed at this point in the lecture.)

This is one of the most beautiful passages of this early book which has no parallel in the later ones, and therefore I think this is a special joy, not to say a pleasure.

Hobbes ends his chapter on passion in the Elements of Law, Part 1, chapter 9, as follows: "The comparison of the life of man to a (inaudible), though it holdeth not in every point, yet it holdeth so well for this our purpose that we may thereby both be and remember almost all the passions beforementioned, but this (inaudible) we must propose to have no other goal nor other (inaudible) but be foremost, and in it to endeavor appetite, to be remiss if things (inaudible), to consider them behind as glory, to consider them before as humility, to lose ground with looking back (inaudible), to beholden hatred, to turn back repentant, to be in breath hope, to be well and fair, to endeavor to overtake the next emulation, to supplant or overthrow envy, to resort to break through a stop foreseen, courage, to break through a sudden stop, anger, to break through with ease, magnanimity, to lose ground by little hindrances (inaudible), to fall on the (inaudible) position to leap, to seek another fall to position to laugh, to see one outdone whom we would not, to see one outgo we would not with indignation, to hold fast by another, love, to carry him on that so holdeth (inaudible), to hurt oneself for hate, continually to be outdone is misery, continually to outgo the next before is (inaudible), and to forsake the cause is to die."

This is, I think, the most poetic passage in Hobbes.

So passion here defined is glory or pride or qualifications of these.

Now who has the Leviathan -- only so we see what the difficulty is. Keep this in mind: passion as passion, pride or indications of pride.

In a way the end of political teaching proper, Chapter 28, Machiavelli says, or Hobbes says . . . I should not have said

Machiavelli because the men are entirely different, and Machiavelli would never have written this, never. Why is a long question. "Hitherto I have set forth the nature of man whose pride and other passions have compelled him to submit himself to government, together with the great power of his governor, whom I compare to Leviathan, taking the comparison out of the two last verses (inaudible) Job, where God having set forth the great power of Leviathan calls him 'King of the Proud'. There is nothing on earth to be compared with him. He is made so as not to be afraid; he accepts every high thing below him, and the king of all the (inaudible)."

So this is called Leviathan, because that for the sake of which the Leviathan is needed, the state is needed, is pride. Pride is the passion. Fundamentally the concern with what others think of us. That makes man in need of coercion, not so much hunger, not so much competition, for goods as such, but pride.

So in one sense then, while Hobbes wishes to think that the true political teaching should be in harmony with the passions as we have seen, in other things he thinks that the political teachings should be opposed to the passion.

I could have said some more things, but I abstain from giving more than a bare outline of the question for one simple reason. I have written on Hobbes, I believe, more frequently than any other writer, and therefore I suffer a great handicap, because you don't know it yet but you will know it when you're older, that it's very difficult to (inaudible) from publication. But I want to learn from that and not rehash what I have said before, and therefore I would like to be as open as possible to what we will be covering.

I think what I said about this hitherto, that Hobbes had the (inaudible) of effecting a break in the whole tradition, and this affected the teaching regarding natural law, a new posture toward the passions, and which is indicated by the fact that such a great emphasis is put on pride as the central passion.

Student: (INaudible.)

Strauss: The statement in the Episto-dedicatory of the Elements is the question which arises: what are the passions? The error of the tradition consisted in not basing natural law on foundations which the passions do not entrust.

Student: What about fear?

Strauss: Did you notice in this list of passions that fear did not occur? What do you know about fear in Hobbes? What induced you to raise this question? Assuming the opposition



of reason and passion with which Hobbes starts his epistodedicatory, this is opposition--the true principal parts of our nature, reason and passion, from them have proceeded two kinds of learning, mathematical and dogmatic, but these two kinds of learning are opposite. It is reasonable to assume the root that reason and passion are also opposite. Now if the passion is pride, and pride is that which makes society impossible, according to Hobbes, living together, and fear has the opposite character, then fear would be perhaps technically still a passion, but a most rational passion, and from this point of view not so passionate after all.

Student: Fear means rational calculation.

Strauss: Fear is, as it were, the passionate basis of reason and therefore it is not as passionate as pride.

Student: I wish you would go over the distinction again between passion and natural inclination.

Strauss: What I wanted to get at was this: in the globe of Hobbes or of Locke, there exists passion, but no natural inclination, whereas in pre-Hobbian thinking, generally speaking, both, whatever the relation of natural inclination to passion might be, --when we think of a passion, not all but in most cases, something of an action. Natural inclination does not have this momentary (inaudible). If there is such a thing as a constitution of a being, and if this being is not eternal, then there are certain natural inclinations in accordance with that constitution. For example, when you have a duckling compared with a kitten; the duckling with water, the kitten not. We couldn't call these things passions, although there is no question that they have the right of enjoyment and pain.

Student: If life was seen as a race, would there be a natural inclination to get into such a situation in the first place where you would want to surpass others (inaudible)?

Strauss: That is exactly the point which we will be taking up next time if I am not mistaken. If man is that being of all beings which has this infinite desire forevermore ever to have superiority, from the moment of his birth (inaudible). For example, Hobbes (inaudible) recognizing that if a baby screams, that's something different from what a puppy dog means.

If all human desires are just responses to stimuli, there is not one basic inclination peculiar to man. That is the question, whether Hobbes recognizes something--Hobbes does not say ultimately clearly so. We are bombarded with stimuli, and the things with which we have been bombarded gradually build up something like a personality. Man wouldn't have a character. The character would be a product of the atomistic bombardments. Where Hobbes stands in this respect is questionable. But this then seems to imply that man is this peculiar beast,

which strives ever more, infinitely striving, whereas other animals aren't. A lion or a mouse, when their desires are satisfied (inaudible). Hobbes says man is the only beast who is hungry from future hunger, i.e., man is never satisfied.

Student: What I was trying to say before was that if the desire to surpass in man presumes the desire for society in the first place, the inclination towards society would have to be surpassed.

Strauss: Yes, that is very good. I think it is perhaps the most obvious difficulty in Hobbes' view. As you will see, Hobbes said in effect that man is not by nature a social animal. But if pride is of man's essence, then he must be by nature a social animal. That was the critique of Rousseau. He said you cannot have it both ways; either man is asocial, and then pride cannot be in man's constitution; and then he said pride doesn't belong to man at all, to natural man; that is a consequence only of man's survival. This point is of great importance.

Student: From the little I know of modern psychology, they would tend to see these inclinations as part of a drive, somewhat akin to passion.

Strauss: But would an instinct be the same as a passion; that would be questionable.

Student: What about virtues?

Strauss: It all depends; Hobbes asserts that there are virtues; we shall see that. Could there not be in the first place such passions as are virtues? I have heard the view, not in Hobbes but from other people, that human goodness is the same as compassion. That is one possibility; you say this or that passion is one virtue. You could say of course, virtues are not passions. But nevertheless, virtues must be passion supporters, otherwise they cannot be. And this is in fact what Hobbes says: out of fear, virtues arise. They are like horses, passionate horse, and then there must be also a (inaudible) of fear. (Inaudible . . . ) This is no longer the Hobbian view.

Since we usually take more time than this today, we should take advantage of this rare opportunity . . .

Lecture II  
Seminar on Hobbes: January 8, 1964

Strauss: I would say the reason I am attracted by MacPherson is something very simple. It is indicated by the title: The Political Theory: Hobbes to Locke. In other words, Hobbes and Locke belong together. The accepted view--the nasty Hobbes and the nice Locke is too superficial.

You are quite right that Hobbes had no conscious knowledge of limiting himself to an absolute society and in addition what he said is absolutely confirmed by quite a few other writers.

Speaking about the intention of MacPherson, his study is admitted by the concern with liberal democracy. He feels that the available theory is defective, but he feels that these defects cannot be cured if we do not understand the defects, and they cannot be discovered without going back to the root, the origin, which emerged in the 17th century, with Locke as everyone would think, but above all in Hobbes. So in order to correct the basic defect of liberal democratic theory, we must see the root of it in the 17th century, and that is the purpose of the book, to help us toward a better theory of liberal democracy.

He indicates what he regards as the defect of these men, Hobbes, Locke, and also some puritans, (inaudible) individuals. There are individualists; everyone knows that. What I thought he meant by this was an individualism which regards the other fellow as a mere means for one's own ends. But he takes a somewhat narrower view. On pages 253-254 he makes a list of these assumptions. He states the assumptions are clearest and fullest in Hobbes. Surely they are; I mean that is the reason why he is so important. Why he is more important for a full understanding than Locke. He gives exactly seven of them.

But what is the key point--the one which is most important? "Human society consists of a series of market relations." In other words, each one treats the other as merchandise, or at most, as a merchandiser. So men are reduced to buyers and sellers, including their power, including everything else. We are on the market, as people say today, who want to get a job.

The reason this is important is this: he rejects this doctrine as insufficient. What is his standard of judgment? Surely not practical philosophy. But what is his standard? Fundamentally, the needs of today which are not fulfilled by liberal democracy classically understood, and this means the whole issue raised by socialism; that's one thing, and the second thing is the bombs, atomic and nuclear bombs, which means the state, which is taken as the normal political unit by Locke and Hobbes of course no longer has significance. Man's loyalty can no longer be limited to the simple national state.

MacPherson is a traditional marxist, a mild version, a mild man, but still marxist in his (inaudible), and therefore this is of some importance for the background and will naturally affect his interpretation. What a man regards as good or desirable does affect his interpretation and not only casually but fundamentally.

By the way, he seems to be unaware that this attempt was made long before him, a fundamentally marxist approach, not to speak of Marx and Engels themselves, but by a Hobbes' scholar, a German, perhaps the most important Hobbes' scholar--Tonnies. He was a social democrat and studied Hobbes. What Hobbes describes is a Catholic society.

With a view to what he says on page 255, one can--"Obligation of being liberal to the state was deduced by Hobbes from the supposed fact as set out in the materialist model of man and the marxist model of society. Now his direction is this: the materialist model of man is all right, but the marxist model of society is not all right and therefore we have to change the second. This is exactly the marxist position, although Marx will never understand the mechanism because of the dialectic, but this is in principle the marxist position.

Now how does this come out on the level of interpretation? Either he admits that the great theories are based on social assumptions, an assumption in which the orders are not necessarily available, or the way (inaudible). In other words, assuming in the case of great men and powerful minds that the contradictions are deliberate. Of course I have nothing against this alternative. I would only say that there are surely in the case of Hobbes also contradictions which cannot be explained as deliberate (inaudible), and at least it is an open question for me, (inaudible).

As for elaboration of Hobbes, he says that the issue he has to begin with is this. Is Hobbes' doctrine monolithic or not? I.e., is the political doctrine derived from his materialist or his concept of science or not? This is, in his understanding, not the issue between him and me. He believes it is the issue between him and some other writers like (inaudible). Now here already the suggestion is made.

We can heed that while Hobbes' propositions are not universally valid, they are more valid for his and our time than as allowed by those who must have all of it and who therefore reject what cannot be shown to be universally valid. The theory is seen to have a specific historical value. In other words, while Hobbes' doctrine is of course not the doctrine, but it is (inaudible) historical justification, given these circumstances which prevailed in the 17th century (inaudible).

Hobbes could have contradicted himself?

There is a Hobbian major principle regarding the nature of man. But this does not lead to the Hobbian political theory, except we make one additional assumption, not explicitly made by Hobbes regarding the character of society. But if we make the additional assumption, Hobbes' doctrine is perfectly (inaudible).

On page 18, for example, "I shall show further that Hobbes' state of nature or natural condition of mankind is not about natural man as opposed to civilized man but is about man who desires a specifically civilized (inaudible)."

Similarly, on page 22, "To get the state of nature Hobbes has satisfied law but not the socially acquired behavior and desires of man."

Similarly also on page 29, "Hobbes' state of nature as it is written neither offers that very behavior of primitive man nor (inaudible)."

This implies that Hobbes set out in his analysis of the state of nature of civilized man, but in fact he did not even properly describe primitive man, and surely not civilized man. That is X Rousseau's critique of Hobbes. He says this may be very sound, but you cannot begin to read the critique of Hobbes, however sound, if you want to understand the doctrine as Hobbes meant it. So this is at first glance the fundamentals.

But now let us turn to his proof. On page 20: "Hobbes' state of nature as it is generally recognized is a logical and not an historical hypothesis." This is generally recognized, but that doesn't mean able to be worthily recognized, and that is much more important. You cannot (inaudible) logical or historical hypotheses simply do not exist for Hobbes. The question is, was the state of nature ever absent?

Now let us turn to the Leviathan and read the key passage in our edition which is page 83.

Reader: "It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of warre as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world: but there are many places, where they live so now. For the savage people in many places of America, except the government of small Families, the concord whereof dependeth on naturall lust, have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before. Howsoever, it may be perceived what manner of life there would be, where there were no common Power to feare; by the manner of life, which men that have formerly lived under a peacefull government, use to degenerate into, in a civill Warre."

Strauss: So the state of nature was actual although never generally thought. What this qualification means, which is of course very important, cannot be established on the basis

of these passages, but needs a very long reflection and have to do with whether Hobbes assumes the eternity of the human race or not, because if there were always men, there will not be the state of nature because there is no beginning, but this was not even considered. So it was actual. Page 61, the last paragraph.

Reader: "For Germany, being antiently, as all other Countries, in their beginnings, divided amongst an infinite number of little Lords, or Masters of Families, that continually had wars one with another; those Masters, or Lords . . . "

\* Strauss: That is all we need. So the Lords can be masters of families and whether they have some (inaudible) place is uninteresting. It is impossible to say that for Hobbes the state of nature was not actual (inaudible . . . ). How this came about is not discussed at all. Rousseau made it perfectly clear on his Discourse on the Origin of Inequality where Rousseau says very emphatically it was not actual, and why? Because the doctrine of the state of nature as an historical passage incompatible with the (inaudible); that was the reason. And not these logical considerations. It was the doctrine from Pufendorf on made in the 18th century (inaudible) as a construct, meaning what are the rights and duties of man were there no human government. I think there university teachers were much more under the compulsion to adjust their teachings to the (inaudible) provided because if you read Hobbes and Locke and look at the biblical account and you get into very great problems. Because it cannot be the state before the fall because then Adam had supernatural (inaudible), nor after the fall because it is a state of corrupt nature.

A simple study of Hobbes' Civil Government would show you that the state of nature as Locke understands it would begin only after the flood because man has a natural right to eat meat, a right which is given only (inaudible) Noah.

| So, in other words, of course the state of nature is actual.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: If I remember, Pufendorf is the first to set forth this view that it is a necessary assumption for political theory in order to have a complete picture of those rights and duties which belong to man by nature. You see in the traditional teaching it really was not orderly in this sense, that you have here, a full list of developments and obligations, divine right or human right. Look at Grotius--he jumped all the time from one to the other. (Inaudible) present a teaching which contained nothing but natural right, nothing but that, and the theoretical expression of that is man in the state of nature, a state in which there aren't any possible flaws, human and divine. But whether Pufendorf was the first or whether it was later, I do not know; it is not really important.

Now another point on page 25. The natural condition of mankind covers the whole chapter of the Leviathan in which Hobbes moves from the present conditions of men to the brutish conditions. The natural condition of mankind is (inaudible).... Of course not. If it is natural, it is always natural; it may be modified, it may be controlled, but it is fundamentally there, otherwise it wouldn't be natural.

In the sequel on pages 25-26 he has a brief discussion on the term 'state of nature.' He deplores that Hobbes uses this term. The only defense for this was that he had to use it because it was the only term that meant exactly what he meant. Surely the defect of the term shows the defect of Hobbes' teaching. Hobbes was not compatible with that as we right away see. There is no awareness at all in MacPherson about the pre-history of the term without which one cannot understand his dispute about it.

There are some little things which one might easily observe. In the English writing, the title is The Natural Condition of Man with Regard to Felicity and Ignorance; in the Latin, translation, natural is omitted. Why he did it again is not known.

Student: (INaudible.)

Strauss: That is one point, that Hobbes describes man in the state of nature -- Hobbes' notion of man in the state of nature is copied from man in civilized society; that is for sure. But this was the great critique which Rousseau directed against Hobbes and which is absolutely sensible. But he cannot start with a fundamental criticism of Hobbes if we want to understand him, if we want to see how things appear to him. If Hobbes is worthwhile, in spite of his gross errors, we must as it were extract from the erroneous character of his doctrine and see how they could appear as truth to a man of the proper mind.

There is something else to be said, however, on this point which you raised. The question can be stated very simply. Pride plays such a great role as MacPherson of course does not deny. Pride is clearly a passion which has to do with others, obviously, superiority to others, obviously. I will explain it more fully when we come in the first chapter of De cive to the explicit denial of Aristotle's assertion that man is by nature a social or political animal. Hobbes never understood what Aristotle meant; it is so fundamental. In other words, Hobbes believed he could prove that man is by nature not a social animal and that man is by nature anti-social, but anti-sociality is only a mode of sociality. Think of juvenile delinquents; they are not asocial; they are anti-social. And Hobbes has not understood the simple and fundamental meaning of Aristotle's doctrine of sociality. How is it possible that this could have escaped Hobbes. There must have

been some very powerful urgings away from this simple and sound teaching which today, I believe, is not only generally held but widely accepted, that man is a social animal.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: It is true that Hobbes speaks of present-day society at his time but he would say he can discover natural man in civilized society because if these things are natural, they can never be extricated. That is simple. This problem that natural man was radically different (inaudible) and primitive compared with civilized man and other notions, that emergence is the basis of Rousseau's criticism.

Forgive me for saying so, I have made this I believe 100 per cent clear in my (inaudible) in my discussion about Hobbes.

Now let me see. Hobbes' analysis appears to be about man as such, not about man as civilized man. This in a way is true, not about civilized man in particular but of course also about civilized man because civilized man is nevertheless still man. Yet since by the time the argument reaches the hypothetical state of nature, the question is, where did civilizations get into the argument. The answer is of course because we have to take a model of a society. The same question is repeated on page 32 at the beginning of the second paragraph. What type or what model of society did Hobbes assume? Here we have gradually a more precise formulation and then we begin to understand. That is done on pages 34-37. If you assume with MacPherson that the physiological model as he calls it is a study of a self-moving and self-directed being--man is by nature a self-moving and self-directed being, there is no reason on earth why they should be by nature in a war of everybody against everybody, why they should be by nature antagonistic? That is a good question. This part of the argument--if the premise is correct, if this is Hobbes' theoretical model, i.e., if this is Hobbes' view of human nature that he is a self-directed and self-moving animal, the antagonism, the natural antagonism between men, does not follow according to MacPherson from Hobbes' psychological or whatever you call it premise. And then he says, where does antagonism come in; answer, by a good penetrating look at the market society.

(Inaudible.) Hobbes would say you are mistaken; have you ever lived in a village? Even if they don't compete with the commodities, they compete with the marriage of their daughters, and there are many other things which are of no interest to MacPherson but Hobbes says they are important because you will have them even when the state has completely withered away.

There is a clear statement on page four at the end of the first paragraph. "In the course of his argument he has made several assumptions not contained in the original psychological



analysis. The original psychological analysis is roughly the self-directed animal plus some other things which man does such as language." My statement now is fair to MacPherson because he does not make more of reason than I just made of it, i.e., he makes much less of reason than Hobbes makes of it.

Paragraph 3 of the same page: "However, the popular (inaudible) power of every man opposes the power of every other man is not offered by Hobbes as self-evidence but is supported by other populists which are (inaudible). As to what the populists were, two views are possible depending on the interpretation of some of Hobbes' statements." "In the view which seems to me more solidly based, Hobbes was (inaudible) position of power from A, a physiological postulate that some, not all men, innately desire ever more power in their life while the rest of society (inaudible). And B, the implied postulate that society is so fluid (inaudible) that the behavior of the immoderately decided men compels all the others to enter the contest of power over others." "In the other view Hobbes was inconsistent. While Hobbes sometimes (inaudible) position of power from the postulate that some, but not all men, innately desire more, he offers (inaudible) to distinguish the physiological postulate that all men innately desire ever more power over others. It is not disputed in the second view that Hobbes did say that only some men are innately the (insudible). He only asserted that he was inconsistent. Now this is the issue between him and me.

Do all men have an innate desire for ever more power or only some men? His discussion follows and I think we should read it.

Reader: "The evidence for Hobbes' position that only some men innately desire ever more power is clear. It will be remembered that Hobbes had stated earlier in the Leviathan, Chapter 8, page 56, that not every man wants more power ...."

Strauss: And so on.

Reader: "Every man's innate desires are indeed intrepid, but not every man's are for a discrete level of satisfaction or power. All men in society and in the height of that equal state of nature as well do seek ever more power but not because they have an innate desire for it. The innately moderate man in society must seek more power simply to protect his present level."

Strauss: In other words, the two premises of Hobbes are: some men desire innately ever more power and these society accepts as every man's natural power can be invaded by others. I mean there could be a society in which every man's power could not be invaded. Therefore, in fact, all men strive for ever more power, some innately, and some only under compulsion. This is the point.

Now of course one could here raise this question: in the first place, is there a society possible in which a man's natural powers can not be invaded by others. Can there be such a society?

One can say that Hobbes starts from this simple brute fact which doesn't need any proof and which you all know--that every one of us is not only mortal but killable. You know if you are killed, you lose all your power, natural and (inaudible). And there are of course other forms of invasion. So in other words the invasion is in the strict and radical sense (inaudible) always possible.

Now let us first turn to that passage to which we were referred on page 41. That was Leviathan, Chapter 8. In other words, this question, some men desire innately ever more power, and others don't. Let us grant that, that there is some argument for that and some evidence, but what do we have to think then of these two types? Page 46.

Reader: "The causes of this difference of Witts, are in the Passions: and the difference of Passions, proceedeth partly from the different Constitution of the body, and partly from different Education. For if the difference proceeded from the temper . . . "

Strauss: The different Constitutions of the body - that's natural, the other is conventional.

Reader: "of the brain, and the organs of Sense, either exterior or interior, there would be no lesse difference of men in their Sight, Hearing, or other Senses, than in their Fancies, and Discretions. It proceeds therefore from the Passions; which are different, not onely from the difference of mens complexions; but also from their difference of customes, and education.

The passions that most of all cause the differences of Wit, are principally, the more or lesse Desire of Power, of Riches, of Knowledge, and of Honour. All which may be reduced to the first, that is Desire of Power. For Riches, Knowledge and Honour are but severall sorts of Power.

And therefore, a man who has no great Passion for any of these things; but is as men terme it indifferent; though he may be so farre a good man, as to be free from giving offence; yet he cannot possibly have either a great Fancy, as Scouts, and Spies, to range abroad, and find the way to the things Desired: All Stedinesse of the minds motion, and all quicknesse of the same, proceeding from thence. For as to have no Desire, is to be Dead: so to have weak Passions, is Dulnesse; and to have Passions indifferently for every thing, Giddinesse, and Distraction; and to have stronger, and more vehement Passions for any thing, than is ordinarily seen in others, is that which man call Madnesse."

Strauss: So what do we have to think of those men who have no strong desires, no desires for ever more. I think we can start by calling them valid, or distracted, i.e., they may be the majority, but they would be the less interesting kind of man. And then we speak of those people who make some political noise are not them. No. So Hobbes would be perfectly justified for the sake of political theory that this minority, if it is a minority, is more interesting. But even theoretically speaking, cannot we not say in order to understand man take our bearings more by the (inaudible) human beings, whatever the standard of goodness may be. Again, MacPherson is absolutely silent about this remark because he's a working man.

Let me add another point. The mere fact that some men desire innately ever more power is sufficient for explaining the universal antagonism, the universal antagonism, because these few create such an insecurity that all the others are affected by this, and they do not know when they see someone for the first time, is he one of these giddy or dull or messy or other things, but must immediately (inaudible).

If some people desire ever more power, they create such a state of insecurity that everyone must desire ever more power. The few threaten the many, i.e., (inaudible).

Hobbes doesn't say that men are equal in every respect. He says only that men are equal in the most important respects, and because everybody can kill everybody else . . .

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: I said you have to consider what Hobbes says about the relative character and quality of these two groups. If Hobbes would say these are perverted men, but Hobbes didn't say that.

To repeat, the issue is only this: innate or not innate desire of all men for ever more power.

Well, I believe I am entitled to say something in my defence. Should I? When he says in 42, there is only a single statement of Hobbes to the effect that men from their very birth are naturally clamoring (inaudible), and would have all the world if (inaudible). All men want to be universal tyrants. No wonder that there is a war of everybody against everybody, mitigated by some other factors.

I happened to see yesterday which I didn't know before, that there is a parallel to that, although not clear at this point, in De cive in the preface where he says "if you don't give to children everything they desire, then they cry and get

angry. They even hit their parents, and they have it from nature that they act in this way." This is the same point, only here more powerful and more developed. This statement of Hobbes is not a Catholic statement, but the most important statement I believe you would find in a man, *de homina*, chapter 11, paragraph 15.

In addition, I would like to bring up some broader issues. The chapter which I read from De Cive is in the beginning of page 22, and is much weaker than the latin. In other words, children are not like puppies and kittens. There is a certain something in man which is in a way quite admirable.

Now why is this issue so important - innate or not innate desire? His argument, as it appears on page 45, can be refuted. If it is not universally (inaudible), there is no need to record to a specific model of society. I have already shown that this is not true, because some are by nature (inaudible). If men are by nature innate, and desire for more power, there is an antagonistic state of nature. Page 45 in the first chapter.

Reader: "But we need not pursue this point. It is more important to notice that even if this is allowed as a physiological postulate . . . "

Strauss: Namely that the antagonism is rooted in the nature of man.

Reader: "All that follows from it without the further social consumption is that all men in the state of nature must be in continual opposition to each other. A further assumption, however, is needed to demonstrate that all men in society must be in continual opposition to each other and strive for more power over others, which is what Hobbes does try to demonstrate in his analysis of power, value, and honor."

Strauss: If men are by nature antagonistic, they will be antagonistic also in society - this only qualifies this. In other words, they will not be engaging more in a life and death struggle, each one living in his foxhole, but they live together in towns and villages, but they will of course become all of them competicized, competition for honour or whatever, and this is the qualified antagonism. The qualified antagonism is popular, and from Hobbes' point of view, even desirable.

But I will raise now the more important question: if innate or not innate desire for ever more power. Let us turn to Leviathan, page 81.

Reader: "And from this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himselfe, so reasonable, as Anticipation; that is, by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can, so long, till he see no other power great enough

to endanger him: And this is no more than his own conservation requireth, and is generally allowed."

Strauss: In other words, this is something fair, justice.

Reader: "Also, because there be some, that taking pleasure in contemplating their own power in the acts of conquest, which they pursue farther than their security requires; if others, that otherwise would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds, should not by invasion increase their power, they would not be able, long time, by standing only on their defence, to subsist. And by consequence, such augmentation of dominion over men, being necessary to a mans conservation, it ought to be allowed him."

Strauss: Now here we have again this distinction between the two kinds of men of which we spoke before. There are some that take pleasure in contemplating their own power in acts of conquest; there are others, and he doesn't say here whether they are more and others are less, who would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds. What is the distinction between the two types? Hobbes uses now a somewhat more precise expression. He does not speak of an innate desire; that's not the issue, nor was this the issue I believe for me when I wrote the book, but the issue is something else.

Student: Contemplating their own power.

Strauss: Yes. They look at their own acts. A critique of pride could under certain conditions take this form. For example, isn't it the usage in the House of Commons when the Speaker is elected that we must claim a show by the conduct of his own unworthiness and his unwillingness to become Speaker. I believe that is so; I believe it is the heart of the British constitution. The Athenians would not have done that. It is an interesting thing; it has to do with the fact that people talk today so much about power and not much about glory. Power we can have a desire for; glory we cannot. And the famous traditional fault of historiography--the praising of the capture over against the inventor of useful machines; power is not as such resplendent; glory is.

Comfortable self-preservation is one of the most beautiful expressions coined--I think it was coined by Locke. I think one can trace the substitution of power for glory in Hobbes. If you would read all the textbooks in American government, you would find hardly any references to glory, but plenty to power.

So the desire for ever more power is rooted in pride. But there is also a desire for ever more power which is rooted in

what? Let us use a Hobbian term which is not used here--self-preservation. Self-preservation and pride.

Now I introduce here another term which is also generally Hobbian, instead of self-preservation--fear of violent death. Violent death meaning violent death at the hands of other men. This is the fundamental cleavage. So innate and not innate, but pride and fear of death. Let us read that paragraph, 43, second paragraph.

Reader: "Strauss recognizes that Hobbes stated that not all men naturally desire more (inaudible), and reconciles this with the opposite position he attributes to Hobbes by saying that there are in Hobbes two kinds of striving after power, an irrational striving which is a natural appetite of man as such, and a rational striving of those who would be content with a moderate power but find they must strive for more power to protect what delight they have. Hobbes does indeed say that some men strive for ever more power naturally, and may well be called an irrational striving, and that some men seek more power only to protect the moderate delight and power that would satisfy. It may well be called a rational striving. But it cannot be inferred from this that Hobbes was attributing the innate or irrational striving to all men."

Strauss: Surely not; but who committed that error? The main point is that he did not bring out a (inaudible) that this one thing, this irrational striving, is pride. That is the key point. And the other is fundamentally self-preservation. Say comfortable self-preservation, but fundamentally sheer self-preservation, or negatively but more powerfully stated, fear of violent death. (Inaudible . . . ) proves absolutely that Hobbes thought of man as a social animal because both pride and fear of violent death, i.e., self-preservation, are both social phenomenon.

Now the question is then more properly stated: is pride universal, or only a peculiarity of some men? Page 43, paragraph 3.

Reader: "Strauss points also to the fact that Hobbes found the striving for honor or precedence over others and recognition of this precedence to be a universal characteristic of man. So he did, but he did not say this was the nature of all men."

Strauss: Let us stop here. So pride is also according to MacPherson universal. He only says it is not innate in all men. I believe I never said this, and I'm not aware of the evidence. Let me show you what MacPherson has in mind.

So let us then say that this nasty irrational striving which we now call pride is a universal phenomenon, and I believe there is some evidence for that because people can be extremely modest and this modesty is a clear sign of ambition. I mean I wouldn't assert that it is universal. We are now concerned with what Hobbes states, but to begin with there is of course a strong case. We are then at this proposition: pride is universal,

although not universally innate. But then I began to see what he has in mind. And it is an entirely different question. The question is: is pride not primary? In the legitimate sense of the term, can one not say that pride is the fear of violent death? Now what does this mean? If pride is the root of man's irrational conscience, and fear of death the root of his rational conscience, does not unreasonableness necessarily precede reasonableness? Let us turn to page 397 of the Leviathan.

Reader: "As men that are utterly deprived from their nativity, of the light of the bodily eye, have no idea at all of any such light, and no man can see in his imagination any greater (inaudible) than he has at some time or other pursued by his outward senses, so also is it of the light of the Gospel and of the light of the understanding, that no man can conceive that there is any greater degree of it than that which he has already attained unto. And from this it comes to pass that men have no other means to acknowledge their own darkness, but only by reasoning from the unforeseen mischances that befall them on their way."

Strauss: And in the next paragraph he speaks: "The enemy has been here in the night of our natural ignorance." The natural thing is ignorance, but this ignorance does not mean absent of any thought or passion; on the contrary, it means that the irrational society exists.

Now I cannot go into this further reasoning, especially because it is in no way taken up by MacPherson. One has to consider of course Hobbes' full analysis of irrationality, and that means especially the thing he discusses in the fourth part of the Leviathan, prophecy and all other things of this kind which for Hobbes of course fall under the heading 'pride.' Read the chapter on property.

All right, so it does make sense to speak of the primacy of pride. But the question is this. Are these facts to which I just referred to sufficient for asserting the primacy of pride simply, and I would say no. Page 44 of MacPherson's book, toward the bottom of the page. "The desire for glory is not a passion independent of the desire for power." So there are much more powerful reasons than that. These explain why my later (inaudible) on Hobbes I did not put the emphasis on this pride and fear of violent death aspect of this doctrine, to which I did originally. Now when reading this criticism, I must say I wonder whether I was wise in (inaudible). I am perfectly willing to restore it or to keep it buried, but this much is clear; the issue is entirely open and to repeat it is this. Is Hobbes' doctrine of the nature of man sufficiently stated by saying that man is by nature a self-motivating and self-directing animal, or is this too narrow a notion, and if it is fully understood, Hobbes' definition of man, it by itself explains perfectly the war of everybody against everybody. I believe even

on the basis of what we have seen today that man is by nature a being capable of pride, this of course we cannot deny. Then this universal insecurity follows because people, even if they are a minority, they will create trouble for everybody else.

To repeat, the issue is, does the war of everybody against everybody follow from Hobbes' physiological postulate, or does it not. Now why does it follow? Let us first see the other side of this argument. If we take Hobbes' definition of man, self-directing and self-moving animal, this has one crucial implication. Man is radically selfish by nature. His concern for others is due either to calculation or to such fundamentally selfish things as luck, or of course coercion, but there is no natural impulse towards that. But, and I try now to state the case for MacPherson as strong as I can, that men are by nature selfish does not yet mean that they are by nature antagonistic. In other words, if they are selfish, then in case of any complications, they can get nasty to the other fellow, but they have not a basic nastiness in themselves.

I repeat, the question is: what is the fundamental directive of man? According to Hobbes, if it is sufficiently described by MacPherson.

Now what is the fundamental property of man which leads to the consequence of the war against everybody? I think this is bound in a way to the preface in De cive. Hobbes says men are bad, in the preface to De cive. Now if they are bad, then it would seem the antagonism follows. Let us consider this for one moment. Now all men are bad, but if we do not make the severe test which the Bible makes, we would have this whole thing empirically wrong. But then is Hobbes the only one who has ever said that? Machiavelli states that all political thinkers started from the point that all men are bad. But Hobbes rejects the thesis that man is by nature bad in the preface to De cive. The reason he gives is because they cannot be (inaudible) without impiety, meaning man is created by God and as a creature of God he can't be bad. But the question is how far Hobbes accepts this traditional teaching.

It seems to me that on the basis of this 13th chapter of the Leviathan which deals with man's natural conditions and man is from Hobbes' view of nature bad, and the issue of the state of nature, man's natural condition, is not separable in the 17th and 18th centuries and those centuries where the state of nature was not a standard political term from the consideration of the relation to the Bible.

Now man is by nature bad; let us assume that this is what Hobbes truly means. This is of course opposed to the opposite view that man is by nature good, which is in a way the traditional teaching--man is created by God. But where do we find



the thesis that man is by nature good in modern times? I think it is generally known this nasty animal from (inaudible) who taught that man is by nature nasty and this lover of mankind from Geneva who taught that man is by nature good. What does Locke assert when he means man is by nature good. I would suggest compassion. Hobbes says just the opposite; man is by nature antagonistic.

What does Aristotle say about the issue, man is good or bad?

Student: In the Politics he refers to the fact that man has the faculty for doing great evil or doing great good.

Strauss: But under what conditions will he be good? If he is well brought up, i.e., education, society, if the laws are good. But without law, he's the worst of all beasts; that is what he says. Now when Hobbes speaks of the state of nature, he means of course man not under the influence of law. Hobbes seems to be in perfect agreement. If by nature man is without any education and any external constraints, they seem to be in perfect agreement. But what is the difference between Hobbes and Aristotle? Man is by nature ordered toward society, according to Aristotle. This is out in Hobbes. Man is not by nature ordered toward society. Society is a human invention, human contrivance. Man is by nature solitary and selfish. Now this in itself is not entirely novel; do you remember anyone who has said that? We have read Nico, and Nico gave us a long list, and Hobbes was only one of them. Lucretius in the 5th book. According to Plato's suggestion in the Laws, the first stage of man is that of the cyclope--(inaudible) and his brother; they are completely isolated from each other, but they are not antagonistic towards each other. They are very nasty toward strangers, but that's another matter. They are not simply antagonistic.

There is a very useful passage from the Elements of Law, Part 1, Chapter, 9, Paragraph 19. Now here is a passage which has been suggested to Hobbes by the (inaudible) of the second book of Lucretius, and Lucretius describes there when men are watching from the shore, and the feeling of relief they have that they are not on their boat. What would Hobbes say? From what passion does he (inaudible) that men have pleasure to behold from the shore of dangers for them that are at sea in a tempest, or from a safe place to behold two armies charging each other in a field. It is certainly in the whole (inaudible) joyous, otherwise men would never flock to such spectacles. Nevertheless, there is in it both joy and grief, so as is there is remembrance of our own security present, this is delight, so there is also pity. But delight is so far predominant that they usually are content in such a case to be spectators of the misery of their prey. That is Hobbes' edition.

When Aristotle speaks of the beastiness of man, not educated in any way, he does not mean this nastiness; he thinks primarily

of cannibalism and incest. But not a nastiness to every other man. Now what is it in man which makes him essentially hostile to every other man, whereas the other things make him only accidentally hostile? There is something which makes this possibility of nothing but antagonism. I believe there is only one answer. Pride. If a man wants to be superior to all other men, he is necessarily antagonistic to them. There is in man something essentially nasty. There is also something in man which is not essentially nasty, but leads to nastiness. There is not in man something essentially kind. All kindness is accidental or the consequence of discipline. Now Hobbes surely has here a certain bias.

We can also look at it from a somewhat different angle. This brings me back to MacPherson, not to any details, but to some broad thing. It concerns that which distinguishes man from all other animals; of course all men have desires, but man's desire is (inaudible). I mean the issue as I understood it when I was studying Hobbes was are the desires simply a sequel of discontinued acts, now I have a desire for food, now for something else. But there is one desire which runs through, and I believe Hobbes means that.

Let us turn to Leviathan, 54.

Reader: "So that in the first place, I put for a generall inclination of all man-kind, a perpetuall and restless desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death."

Strauss: This goes through completely to the end, and therefore I think the statement made about the baby which MacPherson did (inaudible) is really (inaudible). It is perpetual, because it begins at the moment of birth and ends at the moment of death.

You remember the comparison of the passions which I read to you last time; it's exactly the same note. Man is a being which is raised for precedence and for ever more power. There is a very beautiful passage in *de homina*, chapter 11. I have this here unfortunately only in the German about pleasures regarding which there is satiety, like the lust of the flesh, I say nothing because the pleasure in that regard is compensated by the disgust. In addition, they are all too well known and some of them are sordid. The highest good, or it is also called felicity, cannot be found in the present life, because if the ultimate goal has been achieved, nothing further could be desired. From this it follows that from this moment on nothing would be good anymore for man, because it would no longer be an object of desire. The greatest good is to progress towards that ever farther goal, even the enjoyment of the desire is why we still enjoy it, namely the movement of the enjoying mind in the path of the thing which is enjoyed.

But then he comes to a sentence which is not sufficiently explained, for life is continuous motion, which turns into a circular motion when it is unable to proceed in a straight line.

So a natural, congenital desire is a desire to proceed in a straight line, to ever further goals, and then if we run against obstacles, then it turns into the circular motion of enjoyment which is of course (inaudible). When Faust states, that in the very enjoyment I long for desire. You know that (inaudible) has used this passage of Faust to call modern man faustic man. I do not know any of the earlier writings who express this so powerfully as Hobbes did.

One can also state it as follows, that as you read in the textbooks, that this discovery about the infinity of the universe compared with the closed universe, but the infinity of the universe was always known as a possibility, for example, in Lucretius. But precisely in Lucretius there is this clear difference, an infinite universe, but the finiteness of man's good, limitations. The infinite universe seems to call in modern times for infinite goals. Of course, there are truths; we know that. Man is the only being which is truly akin to the whole, by partaking of his infinity.

Now I'll state it very differently, in non-Hobbian terms, but you will recognize it very soon. Man's growth has no assignable limit. Call it growth; call it progress. Now if this is man, we don't have to go further to explain why man is by nature antagonistic. Because if there is no limit to growth, there will be conflicts. He may also grow in the wrong direction. But I think that has to be considered. I would not, being a sober man, or at least trying to be sober, would not put too strong an emphasis for the very simple reason that Hobbes says on page 63 of the Leviathan, the third sentence or so: "We are to consider that the felicity of this life consisteth not in the repose of a mind satisfying." /which was the view of the classical philosophers/.

Reader: "For there is no such Finis ultimus, (utmost ayme,) nor Summum Bonum, (greatest Good,) as is spoken of in the Books of the old Morall Philosophers. Nor can a man any more live, whose Desires are at an end, than he, whose Senses and Imaginations are at a stand. Felicity is a continuall progresse of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the later."

Strauss: In other words, men strive for ever further goals, not merely for ever new goals, an infinite sequence of goals, not one infinitely far goal. For example, from Plato's point of view, you could say the goal is a simple goal but it is infinitely far and therefore to that extent there are no assignable limits possible. In Hobbes there is not one stated infinite goal, but the new goals come to sight only with the achievement of one goal. Man is a progressive animal, both irrationally and rationally. But now we come to the point.

Reader: "The cause whereof is . . . "

Strauss: In other words, this thing has a cause, and if we do not understand the cause, we will not understand the progressive doctrine, and that cause can only be man's fundamental

nature.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: If you compare it with the other selfish doctrines which were developed prior to Hobbes, you do not have this element of nastiness, and therefore pride is something which one surely has to consider because it would explain the essentials of it. And I think it is absolutely there in Hobbes, but it is not the most fundamental. It is derivative. We must begin at the beginning and see how it looks.

But when Hobbes speaks of what men can do in order to prolong their lives, he is silent about medicine. Medicine was the big selling point in Descartes and also later on in Spinoza. Hobbes' strange silence about medicine . . . the interesting case is what can be done to prevent violence among men.

Student: On page 64 he says all men desire power.

Strauss: But in two cases, in two different ways. There is a difficulty here, but not in the form of a contradiction. Hobbes here seems to say the thing which is not, namely that all men have a perpetual necessity for power, which is in one thing simply not true, but what he means here is that all men--no--some men have this desire passionately, without reason; all men should have it rationally. If they would bring things straight, they would see that they cannot preserve the power they have now if they would not engage in the race for power after power.

The one which has become very famous--the criticism of economic man. The man who thinks always of the greatest possible profits, with no other concern whatever, is extremely rare; and this might be the rational behavior of men, but it is not the actual behavior of all men, but you see this is a great problem. There is no question that Hobbes' doctrine as he stated it is surely wrong. But there is not a single man alive, I believe, who would accept the Hobbian doctrine as he stated it. But we must of course go to the root of this insufficiency.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: But this inclination, which leads sometimes to expressions which can fairly be called symbolic, is a kind of issue--what man is, i.e., should be. This cannot be neglected. It is precisely this, what I said before, this progress of man as man, and therefore of every individual at least potentially, and then it means of course conflict.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: After all, we must try to make clear to us what Hobbes contains; in other words, we must have a sufficiently broad notion of Hobbes' intentions before we go into a probing analysis. We should be as pedantic as possible in considering these arguments, (inaudible), and perhaps some defects of his reason appear no longer defective.

Lecture III  
Seminar on Hobbes: January 13, 1964

(Please note that the beginning of this lecture could not be transcribed.)

Strauss: So property was introduced in order to avoid conflict because if all things are in common, then there will be constant fights. Now why conflict--and by thinking that through, he arrives at two most certain postulates of human nature--a postulate of natural stupidity and a postulate of natural reason. A postulate is also from geometry, which Hobbes studied when he was very old, in his 40's. Postulates are the same as actions, but actions with a view to construction. I think in Hobbes the emphasis is on that they are the basis of construction. Hobbes denies the possibility of a communism, and especially of a communism which is without a government. This is of course not new; Aristotle has said this and Plato too.

But what is a postulate of natural stupidity? Each postulate demands for itself the private use of the common thing. I believe Hobbes means, although it is not quite clear here, but on the basis of other passages, the postulate has the private use of all common things. And therefore there is an absolute necessity of conflict. From Aristotle's point of view, he wouldn't say that very nice people couldn't live communistically together, but he would say man as a generality could not possibly do that. The postulate of natural reason through which everyone strives to avoid death, violent death, as the highest evil of nature.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: But that can be proven especially from de hominum, where he makes a distinction between the summum bonum and the maximum bonum. The maximum bonum consists in undisturbed progress to ever greater power. But the distinction is possible in the case of the bonum, it is naturally possible in the (inaudible). And we use the strong term, summum, (inaudible).

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: There is a very useful (inaudible) of the traditional views of the Leviathan in a German book by Carl Schmidt, which title is the Leviathan, and there is quite a bit about the church fathers.

Now let us turn to the preface. He makes it clear on p. 7 of De cive the first theme of this book are the offices of men, traditionally translated as duties. The early history of political doctrines was originally a secret doctrine, but then came Socrates, and of course the whole tradition of political philosophy following Socrates, and they vulgarized it. Plato,

Aristotle, Cicero, and the other Greek and Latin philosophers. This is the tradition of political philosophy. They made political doctrine common; they vulgarized it.

Now it is very strange that Hobbes should be so much in favor of a secret doctrine. Now what is wrong theoretically on page 10 where he compares--let us read that.

Reader: "Ixion was invited by Jupiter to a banquet; he fell in love, and began to court Juno herself; offering to embrace her, he clasped a cloud, from whence the Centaurs proceeded, by nature half men, half horses, a fierce, a fighting, and unquiet generation;"

Strauss: This is not man in general; these are certain kinds of men.

Reader: ". . . which changing the names only, is as much as if they should have said, that private men being called to councils of state, desired to prostitute justice, the only sister and wife of the supreme, to their own judgments . . . "

Strauss: That is of course Juno.

Reader: "and apprehensions, but embracing a false and empty shadow instead of it, they have begotten those hermaphrodite opinions of moral philosophers, partly right and comely, partly brutal and wild, the causes of all contentions and bloodsheds."

Strauss: Since he uses the same latin verb, abdanara, of Ixion and Socrates, seeing that the true Ixion is Socrates. Socrates was the first man who fell in love with another (inaudible) of government. What is the chief fundamental error which Socrates committed in all political philosophy thereafter, and which Hobbes is the first to remedy? The private judgment can be permitted in political (inaudible). Obviously this is what philosophy means. (Inaudible . . . )

And here he goes further and says that these Athenians generated by Socrates (inaudible) the cause of all conflict. Now surely that is a gross overstatement of (inaudible) point of view.

Bacon incidentally interprets the same fable as follows. He applies it not to political philosophy, but to the false image of what is rightly experimental, practical, natural science.

Student: When Hobbes interprets his fable, he is speaking about private men. Does he then mean that Socrates is only a private man?

Strauss: Of course. (Inaudible . . . ) Wisdom does not make a man a sovereign. Nor does unwisdom deprive him of a sovereign.

Student: It seems like he is saying that Socrates is like all other men.

Strauss: (Inaudible . . . ) The funny thing is that Hobbes himself uses his private judgment about the book, by the mere fact that he says at the end, that I submit it to the authorities to either burn it or permit it. But he says we must return to the golden age, to the ancient barbarism, in which noone (inaudible) private judgment and everybody obeys the government.

Student: Is this for Hobbes not much easier than for Socrates or Plato to determine what intelligentness--Socrates would say what would be a wise man, and it is therefore easier to put intelligent men into government.

Strauss: That depends who shows better judgment. (Inaudible.) I do not see the relvance of that. When Aristotle says, we seek not the ancestral, but the good--in that moment everything traditional was questioned. The principle that old as old has no higher place than the new. The strange thing is that Hobbes seems to deny the basic implication of philosophy by saying that private thought as such (inaudible). We come to that later. I will give you only one example. Hobbes denies that men can make a distinction between (inaudible). It's impossible. And he gives you a whole system of principles which enable and compel you to judge a given king as to whether he is a king or a tyrant. Hobbes cannot be unaware of the fact. He would have said I prefer to contradict myself than to affect unnecessarily (inaudible) because the absolute rule of action above all is obey the government, even if you have reason to think, fear, that this is a tyrannical thing. Let us now leave it at this point.

The conclusion from all that, at the end of the third paragraph on page 10.

Reader: "Since therefore such opinions are daily seen to arise, if any man now shall dispel those clouds, and by most firm reasons demonstrate that there are no authentical doctrines concerning right and wrong, good and evil, besides the constituted laws in each realm and government; and that the question whether any future action will prove just or unjust, good or ill, is to be demanded of none, but those to whom the supreme hath committed the interpretation of his laws; surely he will not only show us the highway to peace, but will also teach us how to avoid the close, dark, and dangerous by-paths of faction and sedition, than which I know not what can be thought more profitable."

Strauss: And this is what Hobbes claims to have done. In other words, Hobbes claims to be the first to prove against the whole tradition that there are no authentic doctrines about right and wrong, good and bad, except the positive law. You see he does not say no true doctrine; he says authentic



doctrine. This is not quite the same. And the next one-- whether any action is just or unjust, good or bad, is decided by the positive law, but there are no just or unjust actions; there are just and unjust intentions. This harsh assertion Hobbes thought exceeding to set forth in his preface. If I remember the preface was added to the second edition; it was not in the first, but this is surely not of any great importance.

You also must not forget the context of this assertion. The context presupposes that at the beginning there was a golden age. Now what does Hobbes think about the beginning.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Surely, the primary barbarism, and not the golden age. This is a statement which must be qualified.

So now he next turns to the method, and how does one begin? Let us read the beginning.

Reader: "Concerning my method, I thought it not sufficient to use a plain and evident style in what I have to deliver, except I took my beginning from the very matter of civil government."

Strauss: In other words, not the order of speech, as he puts it. Not merely stylistic. The thought should be there in the first place. I must begin from the matter of the commonwealth.

Reader: "and thence proceeded to its generation, and form, and the first beginning of justice; for everything is best understood by its constitutive causes."

Strauss: We begin from the matter of the city, and then we go into generation and form. Now if you look at the title of the Leviathan--who has it?

Reader: "Leviathan, or the Matter, Forme, and Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill."

Strauss: Nothing about the end. Of course Hobbes makes very clear the end of a society or a commonwealth. Why then does he not mention it, if he says a lot about the matter and about the form and power?

But we must begin from the matter. What is that matter? Have we heard anything in what we have read today about that matter?

Student: The matter is man.

Strauss: Yes, but Hobbes has succeeded in reducing this broad theme to more specific assertions.

Student: The duties of man.

Strauss: Not the matter, because he proceeds from the matter. In the first origin of justice, natural right comes after the man. It is very clear that the two postulates are the chief things that Hobbes has to say about matter. The postulate of natural stupidity in opposition to the postulate of natural reason. So this is clear. The fact that the end is not discussed properly as indicated by the title corresponds to his taking for granted the definition of justice in the epistodedicatory of De cive. This radical break from the tradition is based on the passive acceptance of the part of tradition.

Student: (Inaudible . . . ) but he's not ruling out the possibility of natural justice.

Strauss: If there were nothing to be said about what the positive law says, Hobbes could not possibly speak of natural justice.

Student: But couldn't that be just a sham, the way he speaks about religion?

Strauss: It could be, but as I said there is one very powerful reason, because the question arises why should a man obey the (inaudible) power. You can of course say, well, if you don't, you will suffer deprivations. In other words, you will be fined, maybe executed. But for Hobbes that is not the question. Hobbes wants to have something which binds a man, obliges him truly, and not merely forces him. But we come to that later. Up to now we have a clear contradiction.

Student: Would you repeat what you said the passive acceptance was.

Strauss: Passive acceptance, for example, of the end.

Now how does he proceed more precisely? After all, we don't have to build up a commonwealth as Hobbes does. We have commonwealths around. And why do we not start from studying the state. Why did we not do it. It is in the immediate sequel.

Reader: "For as in a watch, or some such small engine, the matter, figure, and motion of the wheels cannot well be known, except it be taken in sunder, and viewed in parts; so to make a more curious search into the rights of states, and duties of subjects, it is necessary, (I say not to take them in sunder, but yet that) they be so considered, as if they were dissolved, that is, that we rightly understand what the quality of human nature is, in what matters it is, in what not, fit to make up a civil government, and how men must be agreed amongst themselves, that intend to grow up into a well-surrounded state."

Strauss: So, in other words, Hobbes looks principally at the problem, and the problem which we have today, with machines. Now if the states were all like well-working watches, there

would be no need for study. As little as we are interested in, we who are not watchmakers, studying watches. But the trouble is, that is with the exception of watches, what is not working well is the rules in the case of commonwealths. So we have to put asunder this machine in order to discover the foreign body, and then we take the foreign body out and then it works. It does not work with it. In other words, the thing is a bit more complicated, because the foreign body is a part of the state because man is a part of the state, so we must take the state asunder to see what part of man contributes to the good working of the state and what impedes the good working, so we can fortify and strengthen the former and weaken the latter. We must regard the commonwealth as disorderly. This is sometimes taken as a truth, that Hobbes did not mean the state of nature as a factual expression, but only as a hypothetical expression.

Now by beginning from the matter of the commonwealth, which you could do by putting asunder, by separating the parts, we arrive at a certain result, and this result is in the immediate sequel.

Reader: "Having followed therefore this kind of method, in the first place I set down for a principle by experience known to all men, and denied by none, to wit, . . . "

Strauss: In other words, we don't need physics or psychology for that.

Reader: "that the dispositions of men are naturally such, that except they be restrained through fear of some coercive power, every man will distrust and dread each other, and as by natural right he may, so by necessity he will be forced to make use of the strength he hath, toward the preservation of himself."

Strauss: You hear a distinction between right and necessity. So men by nature distrust and fear one another, and this is known to all by experience, but what does he mean here by experience? Of course not that everyone would be immediately (inaudible) natural; of course he knows that. On the contrary, most people will jump on Hobbes' throat, as we will see in the sequel. But he says I know you will contradict me by your speeches, but not by your actions. These are much more important to see what really goes on here. So then he gives this example. And somewhere he speaks about locking up our things because of servants and other people, but also because of our own children.

And the conclusion is harsh, but Hobbes says true. All men are bad, but not by nature, because to say men are bad by nature would be a denial of (inaudible). But Hobbes gives a more specific argument. Why noone is by nature bad. Page 12, line 8.

Reader: "But this, that men are evil by nature, follows not from this principle; for though the wicked were fewer than the

righteous, yet because we cannot distinguish them, there is a necessity of suspecting, heeding, anticipating, subjugating, self-defending, ever incident to the most honest and fairest conditioned:"

Strauss: Here he says, even if there were bad ones or wicked ones, they are less in number than the good ones. This is in accordance with the grammatical construction. It means even in the untrue (inaudible). In fact there are more bad ones than good ones. You know our discussion of MacPherson. There are more evil ones than good ones. But all are compelled in a way to be bad because they don't trust themselves. But Hobbes says this doesn't lead to the conclusion that men are by nature good.

Reader: "much less does it follow that those who are wicked are so by nature, for though from nature, that is from their first birth, as they are merely sensible creatures."

Strauss: Literally animal, in the old sense where it doesn't mean beast or brute, but also man too. Man is a rational animal.

Reader: "they have this disposition, that immediately as much as in them lies, they desire and do whatsoever is best pleasing to them, and that either through fear they fly from, or through hardness repel those dangers which approach them, yet are they not for this reason to be accounted wicked."

Strauss: Literally, they are not generally held to be evil or wicked.

Reader: "For the affections of the mind which arise from the lower parts of the soul . . . "

Strauss: In Latin, this is for the affections of the mind which arise from the animal nature.

Reader: "are not wicked themselves, but the actions thence proceeding may be so sometimes,"

Strauss: The passions are not wicked, but the actions. A denial of the 10th commandment.

Student: He does the same thing in the other preface--divides the passions.

Strauss: No, here he divides the passions from the actions. No, but the question is whether a desire, an act of anger, can as such be bad, and Hobbes, contrary to the 10th commandment, denies that. You know what the 10th commandment is? Hobbes knows that, and that is a key point for his doctrine which we cannot discuss here. He brought it out once with the bishop, who on the basis of the biblical teaching denies it, and then

Hobbes uses it (inaudible). (Inaudible) engaged to be married, and it is impossible not to have anticipated with some pleasure the day of your marriage, and you knew what pleasure would await you, and you couldn't help to inspire a woman who was not your wife. (Inaudible.)

But the action--your can be very angry at somebody and can restrain from killing him. Now ordinarily the law is only concerned with what you do and not with what is going on behind. The law is satisfied if you--you can hate a man as much as you want, but if you don't commit a forbidden action, you are (inaudible); and on the other way around, if you do something forbidden by the law, for a decent reason, you are punished.

(The tape was changed at this point.)

When are these actions evil or wicked? De cive, page 12.

Reader: "Unless you give children all they ask for, they are peevish, and cry, aye and strike their parents sometimes, and all this they . . ."

Strauss: Sometimes is absent from the thing in latin.

Reader: "have from nature, yet are they free from guilt, neither may we properly call them wicked; first, because they cannot hurt; next, because wanting the free use of reason they are exempted from all duty. These when they come to riper years, having acquired power whereby they may do hurt, if they still continue to do the same things, then truly they both begin to be, and are properly accounted wicked; in so much as a wicked man is almost the same thing with a child grown strong and sturdy, or a man of a childish disposition;"

Strauss: In other words, he has the mind of a boy, but the body of a grown-up.

Reader: "and malice the same with a defect of reason in that age, when nature ought to be better governed through good education and experience."

Strauss: So no one is by nature bad, that is to say, because the animal nature is not bad. The animal nature is not bad, and everything flowing from that, surely the passions, have also their actions as long as reason is not yet there. In the case of an insane man, if a man has not yet reached the age of discretion, he cannot be held responsible for that.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Which passions did he mention here. In the beginning passages he mentions some passions. Fear, anger, i.e., passions which dogs also have; a dog fears, a dog is angry, a dog desires.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: But what does this imply? You say of a man, now he's responsible; you say he's a good man. And you imply that those who are bad are not responsible. Of course not. The broken home. You know this kind of argument.

(Inaudible.) There is no question. Hobbes wanted on the one hand the maximum of such a reduction, and here we have the doctrine of (inaudible); but on the other hand, he knew that this is not feasible for the very simple reason that no government, properly speaking, accepts the (inaudible).

Student: It is not at all clear to me whether natural appetite stems from pride . . .

Strauss: I hope it is not yet clear to anyone because we want to find about that. But I believe when you have read the first twelve chapters of the Leviathan, you should have an idea.

Student: Could you comment on Rousseau's reply to this passage?

Strauss: He would say natural man is not (inaudible). I do not remember at this moment what his precise answer is.

Student: When he is independent, he is (inaudible).

Strauss: I suppose what Rousseau means is this. Hobbes implies that a wicked man is a robust boy, i.e., a robustly wicked man. and Hobbes says natural man is a robust kind man.

Student: gives to a man's nature that he is innocent and good.

Strauss: Yeh, sure.

Student: Which is the same view as Hobbes in a way.

Strauss: Of course. Only there is this difference. Hobbes says man is by nature innocent, but nasty. And Rousseau says men are by nature both innocent and kind. And the nastiness arises only through society. Natural man living in isolation cannot have pride, but in society pride necessarily arises, and poisons everything, and from this it follows by the way that for Rousseau a perfect society is impossible, because this vicious element will always be there. That is the difference between him and Marx. Marx as you know would say that there is a society possible without any nastiness. Social man is by definition for Rousseau a nasty man. Only to the extent he succeeds in withdrawing from society can he become good again.

Now let us return to page 13, where we left off.

Reader: "Unless therefore we will say that men are naturally evil, because they receive not their education and use of reason from nature, we must needs acknowledge that men may derive desire, fear, anger, and other passions from nature . . . "

Strauss: And other animal affections. Again you see the affects which he mentions are all empirically known to be common in man and the other animals. Again, pride is not mentioned. Pride is therefore the issue between the two potential doctrines of Hobbes--the doctrine which is strictly reductionist, and gives a man as much as possible (inaudible); and the doctrine in which pride is the main essential difference. Forgetting about pride in the one case; emphasis upon pride in the other case. Hobbes never resolves this difficulty, which doesn't mean that it is not solvable, but he himself never gives a specific statement.

Reader: "and yet not impute the evil effects of those unto nature. The foundation therefore which I have laid standing firm, I demonstrate in the first place, that the state of men without civil society (which state we may properly call the state of nature) is nothing else but a mere war of all against all;"

Strauss: Now in latin, more literally, which condition out of civil society it may be permitted to call the state nature. How often I have read this passage, and did it occur to me one way how strange he makes this great apology for the use of the term. And then I began to think--what about state of nature, of which we hear all the time and the textbooks are full of it in the doctrines of the sophists and so on, and of course there is no state of nature doctrine there. And the state of nature is very common Christian theology. (Professor Strauss is now illustrating on the blackboard and it is inaudible.)

The state of nature is the state in which all non-Christians and non-Jews live, let us say all pagans live.

Now when Hobbes introduced the state of nature into political philosophy, he has this distinction. The state of nature and the state of civil society. There is no distinction between pure and corrupt nature.

But it is a very revealing passage where Hobbes says, "it may be permitted to call it the state of nature." This is a great change. (Inaudible.) The point is that the state of nature is the initial state and a state most imperfect, and the perfection comes by transcending nature and fundamentally unguided by nature.

Now a few more passages from the preface of De cive.  
At the bottom of page 14.

Reader: "You have seen my method, receive now the reason which moved me to write this."

Strauss: Turn now to page 15 in the center.

Reader: "Whilst I contrive, order, pensively and slowly compose these matters, (for I only do reason, I dispute not), it so happened in the interim, that my country some few years before the civil wars did rage, was boiling hot with questions concerning the rights of dominion, and the obedience due from subjects, the true forerunners of an approaching war; and was the cause which (all those other matters deferred) ripened, and plucked from me this third part. Therefore it happens that what was last in order, is yet come forth first in time, and the rather, because I saw that grounded on its own principles sufficiently known by experience it would not stand in need of the former sections."

Strauss: Hobbes' whole work consists of three parts: body, man and the citizen. The description here does not quite correspond to that (inaudible). De homina is presented here as dealing with man and his faculties. But however this may be, the part about political philosophy, the third part, and yet Hobbes completed it because of the urgency of this, the political problem in England, and he says that this could be done without any (inaudible) because this part has its own principles which are sufficiently established by experience. These principles do not have to be deduced from theoretical higher principles, say from psychology. In Leviathan, as in the Elements, he gives in a way such a deduction. If the result of the psychological deduction does not agree with what everyone of us can know from his own experience, then the psychology would be worthless anyway.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Hobbes wants to make clear that he is not merely a political philosopher, but he sees the whole. He wants to make clear that he is competent all around. He only wants to indicate the importance which his time has. If there had not been such bad times in England, he would have written De cive later.

Student: There is some ambiguity about the order.

Strauss: Because man is one particular living thing, or more generally stated, one particular body, and therefore the doctrine of the body in general precedes the doctrine of man.

Let us turn to the top of page 16.

Reader: "advice of private men, but by the laws of the realm, you will no longer suffer ambitious men through the streams of your blood to wade to their own power; that you will esteem it



better to enjoy yourselves in the present state, though perhaps not the best, than by waging war, endeavour to procure a reformation for other men in another age, yourselves in the meanwhile either killed, or consumed with age."

Strauss: So that other men in another age would have a more reformed state. State here can mean political society, or also condition. This is I believe a good example of what people understand today by a conservative. To not take any risks with a view to a possible future benefit. Of course, the term didn't exist in Hobbes' time, as did its opposite. What is the opposite? Liberal. That is surely true--the ordinary use, surely. But whether that is the best expression which we have ever found for that alternative is another matter. But the alternative is concerned with reformation, which means of course the restoration. Of course, the enemies call it rebellion. Rebellion means of course to restore the state of war. So the novel thing is not restoring something which was lost, but bringing in something which was never before. So I think progressive is a more revealing alternative than liberal.

By the way--we do not have the time now--I advise you to read in the Leviathan, pages 455-456, which is a clear statement of what Hobbes understood by reformation, namely going back to the original Christians, and from the Catholic church, the first (inaudible) was Henry VIII or Elizabeth, but this was not reform enough, and then came the Puritans, and finally the most reforming were the independents.

Page 16, the beginning of the second paragraph.

Reader: "Last of all, I have propounded to myself this rule through this whole discourse; first, not to define aught which concerns the justice of single actions, but leave them to be determined by the laws."

Strauss: What does this mean? That the sovereign in almost all cases forbids murder or homicide, that Hobbes did not doubt. But where to draw the line? But what in the case of laws of marriage? Who and who is not a near relative? Which marriage is valid or not valid? But let us go on.

Reader: "Next, not to dispute the laws of any government in special, that is, not to point which are the laws of any country, but to declare what the laws of all countries are."

Strauss: In latin, it is not which are the laws, but what are the laws. Which are the laws, you go to lawyers. What are the laws, (inaudible).

Lecture IV  
Seminar on Hobbes: January 15, 1964

(The tape for the first half of this lecture was garbled, and thus was not able to be transcribed.)

Strauss: Now this is the basis of the whole doctrine of imagination. What is that basis?

Student: The law of inertia.

Strauss: Sure. So the law of inertia is, i.e., a discovery of Galileo, the favorite of Hobbes' psychology. But I think Hobbes himself meant, although I cannot now prove it, that he thought the principle of inertia was necessary for understanding imagination. It can be shown by introspection. That is I think what he means. But this principle of inertia has of course these other great consequences, which don't come out here, but in a passage in *de homina*, Chapter 11, Paragraph 15, which I said before. Life is continuous motion, which if it cannot proceed in a straight line, turns in circular motion. Life is always motion. It is no rest ever. What he calls the rest is fruition, in enjoyment of the thing, as distinguished from the appetite which is only circular motion.

One can very well put Hobbes' thesis as follows. Although he does make here a distinction between rest and motion, (inaudible) formulation of the law of inertia, it remains at rest if it is at rest, and in motion if it is in motion. Still, rest does not exist ultimately at all, but can only be (inaudible) equilibrium of forces. If a stone has fallen down, has reached the lowest point, the stone is at rest. A point which Hobbes regards as insignificant. This is a very long story into which we cannot go. The whole abandonment of the essential difference between celestial motion, which is thought to be circular, and terrestrial motion, thought to go down, is of course a valid one. And the final result was in Newton--there is one mechanic equally true of the heavenly motion and of the motion of the earth; the marvelous motions of sun and moon are not more marvelous than the falling of a star. Only because of the different sizes and relations of forms do they look different.

The ultimate result here is of course that there are no things but only processes, which doctrine made its entrance into political science by (inaudible), processes of government.

There is no essential difference between imagination and memory, according to Hobbes. But one thing which by diverse considerations has diverse names, and the same is true also of the relation of memory and experience, but only a quantitative difference, much memory or memory of many things.

At the beginning of the Metaphysics, Aristotle says experience

comes into being out of memory in the case of human beings. Aristotle implicitly denies that proof is proof of experience. For the many memories of the same thing produce the power of a single experience; in other words, there is a qualitative difference between experience and memory. This qualitative difference becomes in Hobbes a merely quantitative difference.

In the center of page 11, we see mentioned without any further comments a very strange dream. "As Anger causeth heat." Anger, something mental; heat, some part of the body. For Hobbes this is no difficulty.

Let us turn to page 12 of the Leviathan. Here we see what it is all about--second paragraph.

Reader: "From this ignorance of how to distinguish Dreams, and other strong Fancies, from Vision and Sense, did arise the greatest part of the Religion of the Gentiles in time past, that worshipped Satyres, Fawnes, Nymphs, and the like; and now adayes the opinion that rude people have of Fayries, Ghosts, and Goblins; and of the power of Witches. For as for Witches, I think not that their witchcraft is any reall power; but yet that they are justly punished, for the false believe they have, that they can do such mischief, joyned with their purpose to do it if they can: their trade being neerer to a new Religion, than to a Craft or Science."

Strauss: Hobbes indicates here what he understands by religion.

Reader: "And for Fayries, and walking Ghosts, the opinion of them has I think been on purpose, either taught, or not confuted, to keep in credit the use of Exorcisme, of Crosses, of holy Water, and other such inventions of Ghostly men."

Strauss: Ghostly is his translation of spiritually.

Reader: "Neverthesse, there is no doubt, but God can make unnaturall Apparitions;"

Strauss: In other words, Hobbes does not doubt miracles.

Reader: "But that he does it so often, as men need to feare such things, more than they feare the stay, or change, of the course of Nature, which he also can stay, and change, is no point of Christian faith. But evill men under pretext that God can do any thing, are so bold as to say any thing when it serves their turn, though they think it untrue; It is the part of a wise man, to believe them no further, than right reason makes that which they say, appear credible. If this superstitious fear of Spirits were taken away, and with it, Prognostiques from Dreams, false Prophecies, and many other things depending thereon, by which, crafty ambitious persons abuse the simple people, men would be more fitted than they are . . . "

Reader: "There is no other act of mans mind, that I can remember, naturally planted in him, so, as to need no other thing, to the exercise of it, but to be born a man, and live with the use of his five Senses."

Strauss: So there is no other.

Reader: "Those other Faculties, of which I shall speak by and by, and which seem proper to man onely, are acquired, and encreased by study and industry; and of most men learned by instruction, and discipline; and proceed all from the invention of Words, and Speech. For besides Sense, and Thoughts, and the Trayne of thoughts, the mind of man has no other motion; though by the help of Speech, and Method, the same Facultyes may be improved to such a height, as to distinguish men from all other living Creatures."

Strauss: What he is speaking now is of things that men have acquired, what is not natural. Speech is acquired, and if speech were the peculiarity of man, then the peculiarity of man would be man's only (inaudible), and man would literally have made himself man by his bootstraps. But this is not Hobbes' meaning quite, because he has admitted an important natural difference in man. So we know now Hobbes' argument about the essential difference between man and brutes. You all repeated the traditional distinction--man is a rational animal. But as we have seen, it means something very different in his doctrine than what it meant in the tradition.

We have to consider, however, the last paragraph of Chapter 3.

Reader: "Whatsoever we imagine, is Finite. Therefore there is no Idea, or conception of any thing we call Infinite. No man can have in his mind an Image of infinite magnitude nor conceive infinite swiftness, infinite time, or infinite force or infinite power. When we say any thing is infinite, we signifie onely, that we are not able to conceive the ends, and bounds of the thing named; having no Conception of the thing, but of our own inability. And therefore the Name of God is used, not to make us conceive him; (for he is Incomprehensible; and his greatnesse, and power are unconceivable;) but that we may honour him."

Strauss: Here Hobbes makes clear an important application of this doctrine of imagination. Since we have reduced understanding to imagination, we cannot imagine anything infinite, or more generally stated, what is not imaginable cannot be thought. This doesn't mean that everything that is imaginable is true; not at all; but whatever is not imaginable cannot be a possible object of our thought. God is incomprehensible. His greatness and power are inconceivable, which means the same. God is unimaginable.

Now let us turn to page 35.

Reader: "Feare of power invisible, feigned by the mind, or imagined from tales publicquely allowed, Religion; not allowed, Superstititon. And when the power imagined, is truly such as we imagine, True Religion."

Strauss: One possibility is that God and all divine qualities are necessarily final, or our imaginations of God are necessarily untrue.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: That is the fundamental distinction, and he speaks of passion only from Chapter 6 on. But we start from thought. The original thought (inaudible), and then there is what we call decayed thought, and that is imagination or memory, and then there is association of sense or decayed sense, and that is train of thought.

Student: But it seems to me that this statement is so descriptive of man that he should have to include passions here.

Strauss: That is true, but it is loosely expressed. Hobbes is not a writer of the utmost tradition. He is a marvelously plastic writer. I like to compare him to Swift.

Student: Is he at all aware of squirrels storing nuts for the winter?

Strauss: Hobbes would use this word 'instinct.'

Student: How would he know?

Strauss: I suppose he would give you some examples of things he has observed with animals, squirrels and soon.

Student: He observes them?

Strauss: Oh, yes, how can we say instinct about squireels without observing them?

Student: Do you mean passion could be a motion of the mind?

Strauss: Not I--Hobbes says that. We read it.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: In other words, that the passions proper are bodily motions to a higher degree than sense and imagination. But my fundamental assertion about Hobbes as a writer holds--that he is not as careful a writer as Plato.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: I do not know. I simply can't answer your question.

I think that the basic reflections of Hobbes as presented here are very defective. Only one thing becomes very clear from them, namely, what precisely is man according to Hobbes? And this is of great importance because you can see the enormous consequences that flow from it for the whole doctrine.

Student: Is this difficulty felt about body and (inaudible) the fundamental difficulty of the Leviathan?

Strauss: Of his whole doctrine.

Student: How is that expressed in political life? Doesn't that show up some way?

Strauss: Dialectical materialism. The emphasis on means of production, and that means finally taking care of the body. Is it in the second half of the Leviathan where he speaks of bodily harm and fantastical harm? Fantastical harm is harm done to the vanity, and it is something about which a sensible man would never care. It means ultimately that all the higher acts of man are somehow in the service of bodily comfort. Hobbes cannot give a sufficient account of acts of man which do not have this relation.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: But the question is very clearly, what is the purpose of knowledge? And Hobbes says very clearly, science for the sake of power. And that there are some people who in the pursuit of knowledge forget entirely this purpose.

Curiosity in itself leads to knowledge, and is satisfied by the pleasure of acquiring and treating one's knowledge. But that these themselves should not have behind them other driving forces is not excluded.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: This has become very popular today to say that the (inaudible) is only the cause and effect relationship turned down, but this is the consequence of scientific orientation. In former times, people thought of the (inaudible) in the first place, not in science of any form, but rather in life, practical life. Let us state it perhaps more simply--if some animal moves for an end, it is not aware of the utility of the progress. That it could say, now I know --I can now regard the means and regard it as a cause of possible effects. The whole notion of possibility--this is the key difference. Therefore, also power is absent. What Hobbes is trying to understand is the peculiar limitations of animal thinking compared with human thinking. And one can state the result as follows--man is the only being capable of thinking in terms of the possible, whereas thought of the possible doesn't arise when the beast is trying to find a way out of the cage.

Lecture V  
Seminar on Hobbes: January 20, 1964

(A student paper was read at the beginning of this lecture.)

Strauss: Now Hobbes' position of the sciences is complicated. (Inaudible) which goes say from the most general like geometry, to politics as the most specific kind. You remember dealing with the outline of body, and a specific kind of body--man, and even a sort of artificial body made out of that (inaudible). And so there is a simple linear sequence as you would find it also in Kant, and it is underlying the (inaudible) of our day, from the most universal to the most specific.

But there is another tradition, and in this geometry and politics belong together and are radically different from all natural sciences, because these two are a priori sciences, and physics is a posteriori.

And now we have this funny situation--to some extent political science is of course based on physics, because it is based on the study of body or man, and this difficulty has never been fully solved by Hobbes. This was one major point which was brought up.

Now the other point to which he alluded is--and you dismissed it very easily--I can understand your inclination, but it is a difficult thing. That is Hobbes' identification of logic with computation. Now as you stated generally, logic and mathematics are identical. Now if you think of what happened in our century, namely the development of the (inaudible), which is truly something which is a mathematization of logic, so that the radical distinction between quantity (mathematics) and (inaudible), logic, has been bridged from one another.

So Hobbes prepares this development, and I think this is one reason why he is very popular today among logicians.

Let us turn to our discussion of the text. Regarding the peculiarity of man, I have the impression that we had settled this question last time. Man is no longer a rational animal; this is clear. But man remains the rational (inaudible), only the rationality is radically redefined. What is peculiar to man is to consider things as possible causes of effects, whereas finding means to ends is common to men and brutes. Take the chimpanzee trying to get out of the cage. The end is freedom. (Inaudible.) But to consider the thing the other way around--to consider a thing as what can I do with it? What effect can I produce with it? And therefore also sense of power, wherefore power is human and power-consciousness is specifically a human thing.

On page 34 in the center -- "if speech is peculiar to man, as for ought I know it is, when is understanding peculiar?" Understanding meaning of course here only the understanding of

words. That is clear. But speech is a peculiarity of man however derivative because speech is a human invention.

One can then state it as follows. What I called last time following present-day usage causal thinking as distinguished from teliological thinking is the fundamental peculiarity of man. That is natural, but speech is invented by man. Yet speech is a condition of society. Hence, society is an invention because it does not have the natural root, speech. Men are therefore by nature non-social.

But this of course doesn't answer the question whether speech is the necessary condition of society? After all, there are social animals which do not possess speech. Hobbes needs therefore a separate argument in order to establish man's natural non-sociality. In other words, why are ants and bees social beasts, and man is not? He will come to that later.

Let us turn to page 18, the second paragraph, first sentence.

Reader: "But all this language gotten, and augmented by Adam and his posterity, was again lost at the tower of Babel, when by the hand of God, every man was stricken for his rebellion, with an oblivion of his former language."

Strauss: Ergo, all men after the Tower of Babel, are of human origin. So Hobbes pays lip service to the principal view that Adam's speech was of divine origin, and that all language, including Hebrew of course, (inaudible). Because every man was stricken with (inaudible), and there is no language, including the holy language, which is not of human origin.

Student: (Inaudible) Hobbes the accurate history of speech?

Strauss: That is a very long question. We would have to read the third part of the Leviathan, which we cannot read, but you can see from this example that the first order of speech was God himself, but in (inaudible) Adam and so on. Here he accepts that, but he understands it in a very different way by saying all languages now are of purely human origin, and therefore we don't have to be concerned with the divine origin of language.

Can I tell you my private opinion? Hobbes did not believe in the Bible and so on, but to prove that, you would have to sit down for many hours. We come in Chapter 12 to a long analysis of religion.

Now let us turn to page 19, second paragraph. He speaks here of original speech and the use of speech, and then he speaks of the abuse of speech. The fourth point . . .

Reader: "When they use them to grieve one another: for seeing nature hath armed living creatures, some with teeth, some with



horns, and some with hands, to grieve an enemy, it is but an abuse of Speech, to grieve him with the tongue, unlesse it be one whom wee are obliged to govern; and then it is not to grieve, but to correct and amend."

Strauss: Now what does this mean? Speech is not given to us by nature, as hands or claws, but they are invented by man for the purpose of communication. Society, speech, and therefore it is a misuse of speech. So the superiority is here in order because the whole thing was invented for a purpose.

The next short paragraph . . .

Reader: "The manner how Speech serveth to the remembrance of the consequence of causes and effects, consisteth in the imposing of Names, and the Connexion of them."

Strauss: Why should the emphasis be here on the consequence of cause and effect, rather than on things and the quality of things. Now this has become a matter of course for Hobbes because effectual relations supercede the thing's quality relations.

I think we should still have a look at a very revealing paragraph, on page 435, the beginning of the chapter.

Reader: "By philosophy is understood the knowledge acquired by reason from the manner of the generation of anything to the property, or from the property to some possible way of generation of the thing. To the end, to be able to produce as far as matter and human force permits such effects as human life requires."

Strauss: Now here he speaks of property--is concerned with property. For example, we have opium with its well-known property. We try to understand how opium is generated, so that we may be able to generate something equally useful. Now in the latin version, he replaces property by effect. This is a terrific change (inaudible). Property is still a reminder of the Aristotelian notion of things and their properties. So from now on we will think of things as causes and effects, and property and things as such do not come in any more.

There is a book in existence by Casira, The Concept of Substance and the Concept of Function. That is one way in which one might deprive what has taken place in modern times. Casira's book is of course written from a modern point of view, so the concept of function or relation, relation of series of events and this kind of thing, this supercedes the older notion of substance, but since the word substance has its own fine character, let us simply say things, and their quality, the property, and this statement on page 19 is a simple expression of this change.

On page 23, the first paragraph, when he speaks of what can be named and not named. This position is of course generally known by the name of nominalism, but what does nominalism mean?

Student: That the things named do not in fact exist.

Strauss: The thing named existed.

Student: Yes, but in a special form.

Strauss: No, it has to do with some kind of special name in the first place--so-called universal. Say dogs doesn't exist. Now this is of course also the Aristotelian view, but nominalism is a particularly extreme view. There are only names. In other words, these universals have no being outside of our imagination. This is not so easy, because the universals (inaudible) the species, and the species of dog is surely different than the species of cat. Noone has been able to have kittens or puppies by breeding a dog and a cat. The ultimate consequence is to deny this species, to the extent to which it can be denied, namely that there are all kinds of (inaudible) in which species have come into being and perished. In a way, Darwin completed this development by denying the ultimacy of the species as species. But within nominalism there is one important difference--namely, nominalism is an old thing. There was a medieval school of nominalists, but what was that nominalism and what is Hobbes' nominalism?

I think there is a fundamental difference, because for the earlier nominalism the universal, while being named only, i.e., there is no faint dogma, fortunately, of our (inaudible). Nevertheless, these universals are not consciously made by man. They are made by nature. There is a medieval adage--'nature works occultly in the universal'; and that is fundamentally what these (inaudible) mean when they speak of anticipation. When I have the concept of a dog, then I anticipate when seeing such a creature of such a nature next time, that it will have these other qualities. So these anticipations arise naturally. According to Hobbes they do not arise naturally. They are nothing but made, and this I think is the peculiarity of Hobbes' and later on of Locke's so-called nominalism.

Reader: "Fourthly, we bring into account, consider, and give names, to Names themselves, and to Speeches: For, generall, universall, speciall, equivocall, are names of Names. And Affirmation, Interrogation, Commandement, Narration, Syllogisme, Sermon, Oration, and many other such, are names of Speeches."

Strauss: I think that is not difficult to understand, that we give names to names. We say the general name and proper name and so on.

Reader: "And this is all the variety of Names Positive; which are put to mark somewhat which is in Nature, or may be feigned by the mind of man, as Bodies that are, or may be conceived to be; or of bodies, the Properties that are, or may be feigned to be; or Words and Speech."

Strauss: The implication here is that names are not bodies. But how is this compatible with the fact that what is not body is nothing? That is of course also important regarding what Hobbes calls the fantasy. Now what does Hobbes mean then when he says what is not body is nothing? I think we must consider it an overstatement, and what Hobbes is concerned with is that there are no incorporea beings or substances. All beings as beings are bodies. But these beings may produce "things" which are non-bodies. Now Hobbes has never cleared this up. For example, that a word--that is what he means by name--that a name is in a sense what (inaudible), that it is audible. But nowadays people distinguish between the words and the meanings and the meanings surely do not have that bodily character. A word you can devise very easily --and say now the first part and the second part--but the meaning is not elicible, in the same way in which the word is. The meanings are not (inaudible), and they are "ideal" in the modern sense of the word. Hobbes would not have this emphasis provided no one will draw the inference that hence there is an incorporea soul. The defect of course is that we have not made clearly what one may call the ontological status of such things as (inaudible) or words.

Student: Would you mind stating your view on the nominalist issue?

Strauss: What do you mean, my view?

Student: You stated the Hobbes' view and you stated the medieval difference, and then you mentioned Darwin.

Strauss: What I mean in thinking about Darwin--we must never forget the other meaning of species, of which Darwin didn't think. The origin of the species. Species is a term not only in biology but also in logic. And the two meanings were originally inseparable. And the changes in logic regarding the species, of which Hobbes is a major document, prepared that. Is this the answer which you want? Obviously not. Can you restate it then?

Student: I'm sort've asking, what is the truth of the matter?

Strauss: In other words, you want me to say that I do not believe in evolution. Is this what you mean?

Student: He's asking what sense do you believe in universally?

Strauss: I would say I think one cannot make sense in the things with which we are concerned without presupposing and therefore making clear the essential difference between men and brutes. And even if one would have to assume, in a wholly unintelligible way, that the human species have come into being out of non-human, then we would have to say that at that moment an essential change was taking place and not merely a quantitative change.

In other words, this in itself is compatible with something like evolution, only it implies also the admission that a process may be forced to admit by some arguments on an entirely different side, but this is not intelligible. There are some biologists who say that. The crude things which have been observed and which are now known about the age of the earth, through confirmation with the geiger counter and this kind of thing, there is something there which one cannot simply dismiss. And yet that doesn't mean it's intelligible. Man is a mysterious creature, and by seeing how much in common he has with other animals, the mystery is blurred to some extent, but it is not abolished.

Student: But when we talk of things like man or whatever species, are you saying then that you take the medieval view that this is given to us by nature, that this is not something at some point where we draw an arbitrary line and say, this makes man.

Strauss: Just the mere crude fact that the borderline cases are really very rare and through (inaudible), and since man exists we know only of clearly separated species. We have to accept that--that the whole consists of essentially different parts. And the modern project is fundamentally based on the view that this essential difference can be reduced to quantitative differences or differences of degree. The effect you see in the soocial sciences particularly . . .

<sup>4</sup>  
Page 27.

Reader: "I have said before, (in the second Chapter,) that a Man did excell all other Animals in this faculty, that when he conceived any thing whatsoever, he was apt to enquire the consequences of it, and what effects he could do with it."

Strauss: You see again the causes.

Reader: "And now I adde this other degree of the same excellence, that he can by words reduce the consequences he findes to generall Rules, called Theoremes, or Aphorismes; that is, he can Reason, or reckon, not onely in number; but in all other things, whereof one may be added unto, or subtracted from another."

Strauss: This is of course by no means clear, and it would have to be studied very carefully. To what extent is this reducing the consequences an essential derivative from this causal thinking.

But now we come to the point which I had in mind.

Reader: "But this privilege, is allayed by another; and that is, by the priviledge of Absurdity; to which no living creature is

subject, but man onely."

Strauss: That is strictly speaking of (inaudible). You may say that a dog behaves absurdly, but it is not strictly speaking true.

Reader: "And of men, those are of all most subject to it, that professe Philosophy. For it is most true that Cicero sayth of them somewhere; that there can be nothing so absurd, but may be found in the books of Philosophers. And the reason is manifest. For there is not one of them that begins his ratiocination from the Definitions, or Explications of the names they are to use; which is a method that hath been used onely in Geometry; whose Conclusions have thereby been made indisputable."

Strauss: Is this sufficient, that you must begin with definitions? You must have heard this in classes on methodology, how absolutely crucial that is. But what is the difficulty then?

Student: Where do you get the definition?

Strauss: Exactly. In other words, you can arbitrarily say, I believe the term (inaudible), but whether that is a wide use of the term is in no way a guarantee. Hobbes himself gave us an example in the episto-dedicatory of De cive, of a beginning with definition. Do you remember that? He began with the definition of justice, and what was that definition? The traditional definition coming from the schoolmen to Hobbes. What does beginning (inaudible) for a man who has such a low opinion of a scholar? It would have been much better had he started from broader considerations by which he would have shown that this is a wiser definition of justice than alternative definitions.

So surely the definition is the end of a certain problem, which end may then become the beginning of another problem. But this is always leading up to the definition which of course (inaudible) not specifically considered.

And this is the same thing in a different way, when Hobbes speaks of the (inaudible) regarding man which he calls the postulates, these are not definitions. (Inaudible) the universal inclination of man that he has the desire for power after power, this is not a definition, but a clearly expressed fact, a fact of universal significance.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: That is the difference between a definition and a pre-definitory (inaudible). Fundamentally it would be this, that in ordinary words men have (inaudible) in an obscure and haphazard way that this table stands for something which we put things on. And only what is done pre-scientifically and therefore haphazardly, has to be done methodically, and then it becomes the tradition. In other words, the majority of men who speak of tables, cats, etc.

would be wholly unable to define it. Listen to a mother who explains to a child the meaning of a term. So we have men who created words without defining properly. For practical purposes, of course, Hobbes doesn't deny that if we had learned what a cat or a dog is by such things as descriptive qualities as we all know, that this is perfectly sufficient for the rest of our days, but still it is not sufficient for biology.

Student: Are you saying that with Hobbes' postulates, he just took definitions at random from his own experience?

Strauss: If you take him literally, this is what happened. Of course he did not do that. You must never forget that Hobbes and many of his followers are protected to some extent by their natural intelligence and common sense. But if you take it quite literally, it would mean I can define anything. But common sense would then say, why should I from now on call a dog 'table' and a cat 'chair.'

But this is a fundamental difficulty regarding geometry and politics as distinguished from natural sciences. We cannot even begin to argue in political science if he does not assume some basic facts, non-hypothetical facts. Definitions are -- we come to a passage later, where he speaks about the hypothetical kind of definitions.

Student: Doesn't Hobbes in his last paragraph take into account Aristotle's categories?

Strauss: Sure; the whole thing is an attempt to rewrite Aristotle from a reasonable point of view.

Student: How would he say that these are not definitions--for instance, the categories?

Strauss: The categories as categories are not definitions.

Student: When Aristotle talks about substance and talks about different qualities . . .

Strauss: That would be from Hobbes' point of view simply naming names, and just as we name bodies, we can also name names. and the correct name is the definition of body or the definition of name.

Student: I don't understand your reasoning when you say that paragraph 3 does not deal with any distinction in kind. Hobbes himself makes a distinction in kind. He distinguishes the actions of men and the actions of animals.

Strauss: Of course, Hobbes makes also a distinction which Locke does not make between thought and passion. But as you see in the

other aspect, the denial of a fundamental difference between imagination and memory, and between both and trains of thought--there you see the efficacy of the tendency to reduce essential differences to differences of degree. Or experience. There is only a difference of degree between experience and memory, according to Hobbes, whereas according to the traditional view there is an essential difference because you can have n memories of things, and it can never crystallize into one experience. What you ordinarily mean by a stupid man is that he cannot do that; he has seen n cases of this and it has never occurred to him that it is always in substance the same thing. Therefore, the simple, unqualified denial simply doesn't work.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: What Hobbes means is if the definition is vague--if it is a bad definition, then it creates confusion naturally. But the question is also whether some of these vague and unscientific and inexact definitions were so vague because the people were merely too negligent, or whether there was not a very solid reason for this latitude of meaning, and whether it is not wiser to preserve that latitude because it points to a kinship between the things than to have sterilized definitions. You know they are strictly sterilized because they are no longer suggested. I mean how many things do we call love--a very great variety, and one could rightly say we should have a name for each of them, completely different names, in which the word love doesn't occur at all. You can do that. But you lose something by that--you lose the suggestion.

Student: In the third paragraph Hobbes says that man excels all others in this faculty, and apparently it would seem to imply that cause and effect are not distinctive to man . . .

Strauss: But since we have a very clear statement in a preceding chapter, which we discussed last time, he does not go into it. Here it is not so clear.

Student: If you are referring to the statement on page 15, which I assume, it is not clear--he says "I have never seen any signs of the cause and effect tendency, except for man."

Strauss: Yes, we have to discuss that--this can only be a polite way of expression. I have granted you everything you wanted, long before you say that, but Hobbes does not sufficiently reflect on the essential difference between man and brutes, and if you go to the extreme, you can say that he doesn't allow of any essential difference. But I think it is more correct to say that he admits playing around.

Now we must turn to Chapter 6, because there he begins to speak about the passions, and they are much more immediately relevant

(inaudible) than imagination. Let us read then the second paragraph.

Reader: "This Endeavour, when it is toward . . . . "

Strauss: In other words, someone affects things, and then there is a reaction to it, an endeavour towards these things, which is not so when you see only (inaudible). There is perhaps not such a counter-endeavor of the kind discussed. But if there is a counter-endeavor, namely desire or worship, this is the kind of thing he is speaking of.

Reader: "something which causes it, is called Appetite, or Desire; the later, being the generall name; and the other, often-times restrayned to signifie the Desire of Food, namely Hunger and Thirst. And when the Endeavour is fromward something, it is generally called Aversion. These words Appetite, and Aversion we have from the Latines; and they both of them signifie the motions, one of approaching, the other of retiring."

Strauss: In other words, the Latin reminds us of these motions.

Reader: "So, also do the Greek words for the same, which are ὄρεξις, and ἀπορεξις. For Nature it selfe does often presse upon men these truths, which afterwards, when they look for . . . . "

Strauss: So these words are not entirely arbitrary.

Reader: "somewhat beyond Nature, they stumble at. For the Schooles find in meere Appetite to go, or move, no actuall Motion at all: but because some Motion they must acknowledge, they call it Metaphoricall Motion; which is but an absurd speech: for though Words may be called metaphoricall; Bodies, and Motions cannot."

Strauss: What he means of course is that people look for some obedient nature; if they are supernatural, then they will make this mistake. This remark is based on a passage in Aristotle's De Anima, and you will find that Thomas in his commentary on De Anima develops this. Of course, noone said there is metaphorical motion; they meant exactly it is not strictly speaking motion, but motion in a metaphorical sense. And this has to do with a very long thing which I can only allude to. A fundamental distinction in Aristotle which has completely disappeared of course in Hobbes is the distinction between kinesis and energia. Kinesis may be stated by motion. Energia is not understood by Aristotle as motion; it's very simple; the simple state of motion is locomotion. From here to here. And when you have reached the end, the motion ends. You are at rest.

Now there are other motions--kinesis means all change. When a man--for example, growth--has reached the term of (inaudible), the growth stops. There is no longer this kind of motion anymore.



Here there is rest. If someone has reached the stage of rest, in whatever respect, locomotion or growth or whatever, the being can be active or dormant. For example, someone has reached the stage of discretion, then this motion from childhood has come to an end, and then you may always be in a state of dormancy, as being habitually drunk or sleepy, or he may be active. This activity at the peak is what Aristotle means by *energia*, literally translated, the state of being at work. And this is the true peak of any being. So if we actively think or reflect, then we are in our *energia*. This is for Aristotle not a change, because a change is always a movement from an imperfect stage to a perfect stage.

We have today such words like--well, activity--but I think they are used when we can still perhaps recognize something, when we make a distinction between processes and activities. I think we do not use the two terms synonymously. You wouldn't say the leisure-time processes; you would say leisure-time activities. In the present use of the word activities, there is something lingering on.

A simple example of what Aristotle means is this--something which he discusses in the Politics. We work. We are in this sense active. Business of any kind. Business cannot be the end of man. There is also something else which we know which is distinguished from business, and that is relaxation. We relax only in order to be able to do our business next time. But then there is a third which is higher than business, and that we call pleasure. But pleasure is not relaxation. It is not lying in the sun and dozing; that is relaxation. Pleasure is doing something which is higher than business; for example, looking thoughtfully at Bacon; that would be one leisure activity. This is *energia*; and Aristotle would say here there is no motion. When you look at the painting and enjoy it, then this is not a motion. This is fulfillment; motion is never fulfillment.

This distinction of course is completely abolished. This is the absurd remark (inaudible) of Aristotle concerns exactly this point. So if you want to, you can also loosely call this being at work in the highest sense motion. But they are not motions strictly speaking. They are motions only in a metaphoric sense.

(The tape was changed at this point.)

Let us look at the bottom of this page--35.

Reader: "But whatsoever is the object of any mans Appetite or Desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth Good; And the object of his Hate, and Aversion, Evill; And of his Contempt, Vile and Inconsiderable. For these words of Good, Evill, and Contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: There being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common Rule of Good and Evill, to be taken from the nature

of the objects themselves; but from the Person of the man (where there is no Commonwealth;) or, (in a Common-wealth,) from the Person that representeth it;"

Strauss: We have already spoken of this effect at the end of Chapter 4. This is now called by commentators Hobbes' ethical relativism. But it has nothing to do with ethics. And you only would have to look at page 104, the third paragraph: "The science of them is the true and only moral philosophy." And then he says: "Consequently, All men agree that peace is good." So this is an extreme statement of Hobbes' position which we have here, which is by no means sufficient. [Ethical relativism would be the view that all judges of good or bad, noble or base, just or unjust, have no foundation except in the desire or aversion of the individual who uses these terms.] In that sense, Hobbes is not an ethical writer. He starts from the fact that all good and bad (inaudible) are primarily merely confronted with the desires of individuals, but that is only the first stage. The reflection is to an objective distinction between good and bad, just and unjust. That Hobbes never stated this point without any ambiguity is true, but still it is only half of the story.

Student: I take it that this passage does not imply that Hobbes was denying absolute truth or falsity.

Strauss: He does not deny it. We will come to that later. We are speaking now only of the ethical relativism. Let us read the next part.

Reader: "The Latine Tongue has two words, whose significations approach to those of Good and Evill; but are not precisely the same; And those are Pulchrum and Turpe."

Strauss: Noble and base; beautiful and ugly.

Reader: "Whereof the former signifies that, which by some apparent signes promiseth Good; and the later, that, which promiseth Evil. But in our Tongue we have not so generall names to expresse them by. But for Pulchrum we say in some things, Fayre; in others Beautifull, or Handsome, or Gallant, or Honourable, or Comely, or Amiable; and for Turpe, Foule, Deformed, Ugly, Base, Nauseous, and the like, as the subject shall require; All which words, in their proper places signifie nothing els, but the Mine, or Countenance, that promiseth Good and Evil. So that of Good there be three kinds; Good in the Promise, that is Pulchrum; Good in Effect, as theend desired, which is called Fucundum, Delightfull; and Good as the Means, which is called Utile, Profitable; and as many of Evil: For Evill, in Promise, is that they call Turpe; Evil in Effect, and End, is Molestum, Unpleasant, Troublesome; and Evill in the Means, Inutile, Unprofitable, Hurtfull."

Strauss: Now this is the old distinction which was clearly stated by Aristotle in the Ethics between the meanings of good.

The useful, the pleasant, and the noble. And the noble is the truly good. Hobbes has changed that. The ordinary translation for pulchrum is of course beautiful, and there is a definition of the beautiful by (inaudible), to the effect that the beautiful is the promise of (inaudible). You can easily see how one can come to that because beautiful, especially with women of course, and the promise of happiness. This definition of the beautiful was opposed by Nitsche, (inaudible) that the beautiful is that in which we have a disinterested pleasure. This discussion you might read in his third essay of the Generality of Morals.

But the interesting thing which comes out in Hobbes is that the two definitions are originally the same. Good by promise, he says, and then the meaning or countenance. In Thomas Aquinas we read, for example, that the beautiful is that which leaves there the mere apprehension. A rose is beautiful, because we have no profit from it, and that is of course lingering only in Kant. For Hobbes, of course, the Fucundum, Delightfull, the Pleasnt, the Enjoyment, is the true good.

Let us read the next paragraph.

Reader: "As, in Sense, that which is really within us, is (as I have sayd before) onely Motion, caused by the action of externall objects, but in appearance; to the Sight, Light and Colour; to the Eare, Sound; to the Nostrill, Odour, " so, when the action of the same object is continued from the Eyes, Eares, and other organs to the Heart; the reall effect there is nothing but Motion, or Endeavour; which consisteth in Appetite, or Aversion, to, or from the object moving. But the apparence, or sense of that motion, is that wee either call Delight, or Trouble of Mind."

Strauss: You see here again this question which we discussed already before--what is really the only motion, and the (inaudible) and also such things as pleasure and pain are only appearances. They are not truly. Now if we take this literally, of course all passions as passion, anger, fear, and so forth, are not truly, but only the underlying motions, whatever is going on around the heart. If we take this literally, it can lead to great absurdities. But it has to be considered for the following reason. The moral problem was stated more or less at the end of antiquity, say in Cicero, by the opposition of the stoic, (inaudible). And the (inaudible) say the good is fundamentally the pleasant. The (inaudible) deny that, and they say the fundamental good is self-preservation.

Now such people like Hobbes, but not only Hobbes--Locke, too, are also hedonists, like the (inaudible), but the favorite term used is self-preservation, although hedonism is visible everywhere. But in the moral reflections, the chief term is self-preservation.

(Inaudible), but one part of it, I believe, is indicated here. Self-preservation is not limited as pleasure or pain are to the so-called mental phenomenon. Self-preservation is also a bodily phenomenon, and this is one reason why especially Hobbes prefers self-preservation. But this is only in passing.

At the top of the next page.

Reader: "Of Pleasures, or Delights, some arise from the sense of an object Present; And those may be called Pleasures of Sense, (The word sensuall, as it is used by those onely that condemn them, having no place till there be Lawes.) Of this kind are all Onerations and Exonerations of the body; as also all that is pleasant, in the Sight, Hearing, Smell, Tast, or Touch; Others arise from the Expectation, that proceeds from foresight of the End, or Consequence of things; whether those things in the Sense Please or Displease: And these are Pleasures of the Mind of him that draweth those consequences; and are generally called Joy. In the like manner, Displeasures, are some in the Sense, and called Payne; others, in the Expectation of consequences, and are called Griefe."

Strauss: It would seem that pleasures and pains of the mind are peculiar to man. But the passions enumerated in the sequence are not all of them pleasures or pains of the mind strictly understood. Now let us look at some of them; this would require a very close study. We cannot do that unfortunately. Let us read the definition of covetousness.

Reader: "Desire of Riches, Covetousnesse: a name used alwayes in signification of blame; because men contending for them, are displeased with one anothers attaining them; though the desire in it selfe, be to be blamed, or allowed, according to the means by which those Riches are sought."

Strauss: He does not say here according to the laws. In other words, the ethical relativism is essentially the fact that covetousness is a term used for whether people are pleased or displeased; but this is not the whole story. Is the desire itself to be blamed or allowed, now not according to what the legislator has said, but according to the means by which these (inaudible) are sought. We have then another criteria of good or bad which will come out later on.

So in the whole list here, there is no distinction made between passion and habit. Covetousness is not a passion; it's a habit. Hobbes does not make a good distinction. As a consequence, some of the virtues are passions; as you see, magnanimity, liberality and so on. This distinction is one of the many distinctions with which Hobbes has problems. Among the virtues which are not mentioned here are temperance and justice. He could not find a plausible passionate parallel.

The remark about religion on page 35 we have discussed last time. Let us read the end of this--page 39.

Reader: "Joy, from apprehension of novelty, Admiration;"

Strauss: You only see joy. Terror from apprehension in other words is not (inaudible).

Reader: "proper to Man, because it excites the appetite of knowing the cause."

"Joy, arising from imagination of a mans own power and ability, is that exultation of the mind which is called Glorifying: which if grounded upon the experience of his own former actions, is the same with Confidence."

Strauss: You see how much and as a matter of course he speaks from the imagination of a mans own power. This is truly a doctrine of the human passion, without however a clarity which we must demand from such a man who insists that we must begin with clear and distinct definitions, of which are human and which are not human.

He does not say if glory is proper to man, but he implies it. On page 36 we read the fourth paragraph.

Reader: "Sudden Glory, is the passion which maketh those Grimaces called Laughter; and is caused either by some sudden act of their own, that pleaseth them; or by the apprehension of some deformed thing in another, by comparison whereof they suddenly applaud themselves."

Strauss: (Inaudible.) This surely does not work.

Reader: "And it is incident most to them, that are conscious of the fewest abilities in themselves; who are forced to keep themselves in their own favour, by observing the imperfections of other men. And therefore much Laughter at the defects of the others, is a signe of Pusillanimity. For of great minds, one of the proper workes is, to help and free others from scorn; and compare themselves onely with the most able."

Strauss: Ethical relativism--my foot. You see again here how much Hobbes speaks of the human passion. By the way, the only work of Aristotle which divides Hobbes' break with the school is the Rhetoric, and especially the treatment of the passions in the second book of the Rhetoric. It would be an interesting study of Hobbes' treatment of the passions compared with Aristotle's.

Student: Could you explain briefly why Nitsche took so much (inaudible) Hobbes' passions?

Strauss: This I could not find. Of course, I don't claim that I know every (inaudible). Nitzsche gives a statement about where Hobbes, quoting him literally, "Laughter is a very bad

fault of human nature" and so on. I do not know--Nitzsche must have made the mistake of having to (inaudible) summary of a statement of Hobbes.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: That is a reasonable question, but other things too have to be considered. A man can assert a very great influence not only on his time but on quite a few generations, while having grave defects, while having certain intellectual vices. For example, did you ever hear in political science of sovereignty? Did you ever hear of the state as a person? These are two innovations of Hobbes. Without Hobbes one cannot understand the modern development. That is an underlying fact. One can say to some extent today that those things seem very strange, that what happened there was a kind of eruption of a volcano, and as you know, volcanoes don't lay down very orderly--watch the lava that they throw out. And according to a notion of a genius, that is exactly what a genius does. Now that Hobbes was a genius I think we must all admit, and the sign of it is of course his marvelous power of expressing himself. I agree with you, but one also must say it is also slightly pedantic if we disregard the other side.

But the great value of this chapter would be to understand Hobbes' whole approach, his whole point of view. How does a man look at laughter, for example, if he can say that about laughter? There is a lot of nastiness in man; I think this is undeniable, and Hobbes had a very keen sense of the nastiness of man. Whether it was keen enough is the question, and I believe I can show you some examples of that.

On page 37--read that.

Reader: "Contempt, or little sense of the calamity of others, is that which men call Cruelty; proceeding from Security of their own fortune. For, that any man should take pleasure in other mens great harmes, without other end of his own, I do not conceive it possible."

Strauss: You see he can also be very good-natured. On occasion. Too good-natured, I believe.

By the way, here is another point. When he spoke of good and evil on page 32--something is either good or evil or contemptible and has no room for indifference. That surely throws light on Hobbes' "mentality." There is no place for indifference. There is always an effective reaction.

Now the paragraph after the next.

Reader: "When in the mind of man, Appetites, and Aversions, Hopes, and Feares, concerning one and the same thing, arise

alternately; and divers good and evill consequences of the doing, or omitting the thing propounded, come successively into our thoughts; so that sometimes we have an Appetite to it; sometimes an Aversion from it; sometimes Hope to be able to do it; sometimes Despaire, or Feare to attempt it; the whole summe of Desires, Aversions, Hopes, and Feares, continued till the thing be either done, or thought impossible, is that we call Deliberation."

Strauss: Here he speaks of the human, man, and consequences of human. Let us read the last paragraph.

Reader: "This alternate Succession of Appetites, Aversions, Hopes and Fears, is no lesse in other living Creatures then in Man and therefore Beasts also Deliberate."

Strauss: You see a dog deliberate--should he try to catch this piece of meat--the meat here--the stick there--and then he deliberates. It's fantastic. One must not underestimate if we want to understand this overstatement which we have observed in many of his followers. Shocking and unheard-of statements--that is a part of the tradition which stems from Hobbes.

On the top of page 38.

Reader: "'In Deliberation, the last Appetite, or aversion, immediately adhaering to the action, or to the omission thereof, is that wee call the Will; the Act, (not the faculty), of Willing. And Beasts that have Deliberation, must necessarily also have Will."

Strauss: Now a few more passages. On page 39, paragraph 4.

Reader: "Continuall successe, in obtaining those things which a man from time to time desireth, that is to say, continuall prospering, is that men call Felicity; I mean the Felicity of this life. For there is no such thing as perpetuall Tranquillity of mind, while we live here; because Life it selfe is but Motion, and can never be without Desire, nor without Feare, no more than without Sense. What kind of Felicity God hath ordained to them that devoutly honour him, a man shall no sooner know, than enjoy; being joyes, that now are as incomprehensible, as the word of Schoole-men Beatificall Vision is unintelligible."

Strauss: Hobbes cannot speak of felicity without questioning the so-called ethical relativism. But the content of these pleasures is wholly undesired. You get whatever you want, and if you always get what you want, then you live in a state of felicity.

Now in the next chapter--Chapter 7--he speaks of the Ends, or Resolutions of Discourse. Now almost two-thirds of this short chapter are devoted to the debiting of conscience and faith.

We do not have time to read it. There is only one point which is interesting here, and it has something to do with Hobbes' scholarship, when he speaks of faith on page 41.

Reader: "So that in Beleeve are two opinions; one of the saying of the man; the other of his vertue. To have faith in, or trust to, or beleeve a man, signifie the same thing; namely, an opinion of the veracity of the man: But to beleeve what is said, signifieth onely an opinion of the truth of the saying. But wee are to observe that this Phrase, I beleeve in; as also the Latine, Credo in; and the Greek, , are never used but in the writings of Divines. In stead of them, in other writings are put, I beleeve him; I trust him; I have faith in him."

Strauss: And so on. Now I look up only in the ordinary Greek dictionary and I discovered that Hobbes used the divine in a very large sense, because (inaudible). But it is interesting for students to see that the biblical (inaudible) are divine, and ordinary (inaudible), which I didn't know before.

In Chapter 8, I would like to mention only a few important points. This consists in 9 1/2 pages in our edition, and 5 1/2 are the virtues commonly called intellectual, and 5 1/2 are devoted to madness. You see how polemical this whole thing is. I think it would be foolish to rush through that--we will do that next time.

Student: In Chapter 6 you were talking about felicity, and I didn't understand (inaudible).

Strauss: Hobbes is not an ethical relativist. But his doctrine of felicity does not contradict this "ethical relativism."



Lecture VI  
Seminar on Hobbes: January 22, 1964

Strauss: But surely Hobbes is the first man who spoke schematically about power. Honor and glory were discussed earlier, but power comes (inaudible) only in Hobbes. Now why this is so is a very long question. Thucydides speaks of power and Machiavelli speaks of power. It is spoken of as a matter of course, but one reason is that they mean of course always political power. And therefore in order to understand power, you have to know what the polis, what the legal society is, whereas in Hobbes this reference is dropped, and then you get the situation today where you speak of the power of the rooster over the hen, and what is the difference between that and the power of a government or sovereign over its subjects? And if you don't know what is political, you can never answer this question.

(Professor Strauss is replying to a paper at this point in the lecture.)

The science of medicine is right--especially if you consider a few others who were contemporaries of Hobbes, Descartes and Spinoza, who were also very much concerned with medicine, and Hobbes, as you know, was a man who lived very long, (inaudible). I think the only explanation was that medicine faded into insignificance because of the much greater danger of being killed. This reasoning is not very profound.

You mentioned also that in Hobbes there is no connection between honor and justice. That is quite right. We will come to that later on, but this in itself is of course an older story. When you read the description of this-called sophistic doctrine, the theme is all justice is conventional. As for the other things, the noble or honourable, there is something which is by convention honourable, and that is to be a nice man fundamentally, and there is something which is by nature honourable, and that is the (inaudible). So this was the old tradition behind it.

You spoke rightly about the chapter on religion. You raised the question of whether he was an atheist, and you said that Hobbes never said that he was an atheist. That is clear. There are some people who think (inaudible) . . . I am reading a dissertation on Hobbes, and this argument is used among other arguments, and there is the following situation. Hobbes has all the earmarks of an atheist except that he never said he was an atheist. Hobbes then says in expressing heretical views, if he had been atheist, he would have had so. Now that is very simple to refute on the basis that it doesn't make sense. There are quite a few people who follow in fact the communist party line and would never say that they are communists. So saying 'I am a communist' is something very different from sympathizing with them. Hobbes, in other words, is only a sympathizer with atheism. Of course, the biggest argument would be as you suggested to what extent is it feasible on the basis of the evidence of this chapter to see what precisely does Hobbes mean by God?

Student: Isn't it possible to believe that all religions are a lot of bunk and that they exist for certain social objectives and therefore to be very skeptical about all of that.

Strauss: Yes, I suppose in one sense that could even be said by a (inaudible) man, but the question concerns the core, and Hobbes leaves no base for the core. That is the point. When people speak today about religion, they base it on only some familiarity with the most extremely liberal versions of either Christianity or Judaism and perhaps Islam, and this of course is insufficient evidence. Say a church-going man is not necessarily a pious man. So church-going doesn't mean anything in itself. I will come to that later.

Now I am confronted with simple administrative duties--shall we go on in the Leviathan, or shall we discard it. I suggest that we read on. I am sorry--we have a backlog, and some of the difficulties may be disposed of (inaudible).

Now let us turn to page 43 and see at the beginning of the second paragraph.

Reader: "These Vertues are of two sorts; Naturall, and Acquired. By Naturall, I mean not, that which a man hath from his Birth: for that is nothing else but Sense; wherein men differ so little one from another, and from brute Beasts, as it is not to be reckoned amongst Vertues."

Strauss: Of course, a child does not (inaudible), but still it is not like a brute. Why? He may be inferior even at that time regarding sense perceptions, but what does the child have that the puppy and the chickens do not have?

Student: Potentiality.

Strauss: Potentiality. Now, on page 46, the beginning of the second paragraph.

Reader: "The causes of this difference of Witts, are in the Passions: and the difference of Passions, proceedeth partly from the different Constitution of the body, and partly from different Education."

Strauss: Now turn to the next paragraph.

Reader: "The Passions that most of all cause the differences of Wit, are principally, the more or lesse Desire of Power, of Riches, of Knowledge, and of Honour. All which may be reduced to the first, that is Desire of Power. For Riches, Knowledge and Honour are but severall sorts of Power."

Strauss: He even uses the word reduce. Next paragraph, please.

Reader: "And therefore, a man who has no great Passion for any of these things; but is as men terme it indifferent; though he may be so farre a good man, as to be free from giving offence; yet he cannot possibly have either a great Fancy, or much Judgement."

Strauss: Now if you look at this as an antithetical statement, Hobbes speaks here not only about the men who have a desire for knowledge, but also those who have a desire for riches. Now people with a strong desire for riches have, according to Hobbes, as such more fancy and judgment than those who do not have a desire for riches. What is the motive of this whole thing? Or is this an empirically wrong assertion? In other words, a man who has none of these desires does not necessarily have less fancy and judgment than a man who has any of these desires. I think it has also something to do with a tendency which belongs to these kind of tough things which Hobbes wants to sell. The equality of men; men are much more equal. The difference between men who have a strong desire for riches or a strong desire for judgment is not so important.

The next page, first paragraph--"Excessive opinion of a mans own selfe, for divine inspiration, for wisdome . . . . "

And the next paragraph where he speaks of dejection, called melancholy. (Inaudible) . . . in superstitious behavior. Here is already an indication of this attempt to explain religion in terms of (madness is the word he uses) but the passions behind it, pride on the one hand, and dejection of the mind on the other.

At the end of paragraph 2 on page 47--"And if the Excesses be madnesse, there is no doubt but the Passions themselves, when they tend to Evill, are degrees of the same." Even here Hobbes does not have a subjective sense. For example, if someone is proud or dejected, and these passions do not lead to the destruction of that man, do not have a destructive tendency, then they are not (inaudible) of man. The destruction or non-destruction doesn't depend on the opinion of the individual.

You remember this question of whether Hobbes is a so-called ethical relativist--this is taken up also in another connection.

Now let us turn to the beginning of today's assignment in Chapter 9. And the fundamental distinction of knowledge into two kinds: knowledge of fact, which is absolute knowledge and there are no ifs involved; and conditional knowledge, (inaudible). The history of course is that the knowledge of facts always presupposes empirically knowledge of names. Not in all cases, but I do not know what kind of thing that is. But ordinarily, knowledge of facts presupposes knowledge of names. That is one of the difficulties. And, we have also seen that the definition of man, to the extent to which Hobbes gave it, is of course based on fact. Man has this particular quality which we usually call thinking. And ultimately, the whole distinction has to do, as I

stated before, and goes back to the traditional distinction (inaudible). Only knowledge of essence is scientific knowledge. But the essences are now differently stated. The essences become now the formulae, the scientific or mathematical formula, but it is a different formation of the old essence. The incognistic self--Hobbes was quite right--there is a problem here, that part of political science is a subdivision of natural philosophy, namely the science of just or unjust, whereas the science of the rights and duties of the sovereign and subject is a radically different part, namely civil philosophy. There is of course no metaphysics. First, philosophy which is simply the doctrine of the most general concepts (inaudible), and has no longer anything to do with metaphysics.

But the most extraordinary thing in this list of sciences is the abolition of the difference between theoretical and practical science; these are all theoretical sciences. There are no longer practical sciences; you have either theoretical sciences or applied sciences. Theoretical sciences or applied sciences. Practical sciences do not essentially presuppose theoretical, essentially presuppose. Accidentally they may very well.

These are the most striking. There is also no biology here, but this may be just an accident.

But I think the most important is the abolition between theoretical and practical sciences, and somehow connected with this, the bipartition of traditionally practical science, and the science of just and unjust, which belongs to natural philosophy, and the science of the commonwealth, which is the sole subject of politics and civil philosophy.

You see also when he speaks of ethics, consequences from the passions of men, the passions where brutes don't play any role here.

Now the order of these passages is quite strange. Chapters 1-5 deal with cognition, 6 with guilt, 7 again with cognition to 9, and 10 following with guilt. Now it is not quite clear why he proceeds in this manner. The underlying notion may be this, that in these phenomena which he discusses from 10 on, cognition and guilt may somehow cooperate. For example, in Chapter 8, which deals with madness, an intellectual defect caused by passion. In Chapter 7 he discusses beliefs, which according to the traditional doctrine, has the ingredient of guilt.

But we must go on. Chapter 10, which is one of the most interesting chapters, the treatment reminds me very much of Aristotle. The enumeration. That is the thing which is so hard for us to understand. Modern thinkers, accustomed to mathematics and the simple enumeration. And Aristotle doesn't bother to find an inner order in the argument. Aristotle is a man who looks around, makes a certain assertion, and then looks here, and this Hobbes follows here. For example on page 58--"To praise"; "To believe." That is mere enumeration.

But all the more frightening is that there is no discussion of power in Aristotle.

Let us read the beginning of the chapter.

Reader: "The Power of a Man, (to take it Universally,) is his present means, to obtain some future apparent Good. And is either Originall or Instrumentall."

"Naturall Power, is the eminence of the Faculties of Body, or Mind: as extraordinary Strength, Forme, Prudence, Arts, Eloquence, Liberality, Nobility."

Strauss: Let us leave it at this. Here of course power is not defined relatively. That comes later. At the beginning of Chapter 8: "Vertue generally, in all sorts of subjects, is somewhat that is valued for eminence; and consisteth in comparison." The comparison element is here absent from the definition of power. But how can we understand the remark at the beginning of Chapter 8? Virtue consists only in comparison? Why should this be the case, meaning comparing one human being with another human being. This is, as far as I know, a Hobbian innovation. For the traditional view, the virtues are perfection, and the comparison you make is between the qualities of this individual, and true courage and justice and so on. But you don't have to compare him with others to see whether he is just or brave or so on. But if there is no perfection, and that is somehow presupposed by Hobbes, then there can only be superiority or inferiority among human beings. You have a parallel in the notion of progress. Progress presupposes the goal toward which you progress, and then you can measure your progress. But this is absent from the 18th and 19th century conception of progress, and fundamentally for the same reason. There is no assignable goal. You determine progress by comparing various stages. For example, there is stage A, and you are confronted with a problem which you cannot solve, but in stage B, the problem is solved. Then you can say a progress has taken place.

Paragraph 5 on the same page--"Reputation of power, is Power; because it draweth with it the adhaerence of those that need protection." "So is Reputation of love of a mans Country, (called Popularity,) for the same Reason." That is completely lost in the present-day meaning of popularity. For example, an actor is popular, but it has nothing to do with reputation or love of country. But it has of course the original meaning of populus, of people; the political meaning has become completely lost. This would be an interesting study--how popularity would lead completely to political connotations.

Student: I would like to go back; I don't think I understood your point a minute ago; you said power is not defined relatively here, and then you said virtue is, but you implied that power is also.

Strauss: Not quite; a certain comparison is implied, or to quote Thomas Aquinas, all power is to be reduced to something else. Power for what? And without that what you cannot see the power.

But this is of course also admitted by Hobbes, because the present meaning, to obtain, (inaudible), but this doesn't mean that you have to compare with other men.

I made this point because MacPherson overstates this market society business.

Student: You say that virtue for Hobbes consists of comparison because there is no end, and isn't it possible also to argue that when there is an end, you can compare yourself to the end?

Strauss: Sure, that is clear. But this is not what Hobbes means. Even more generally, all power is power with a view to it. If you call this comparison, comparison is essential to it. But Hobbes means the comparing among each other with different human beings. This is not essential says Hobbes.

Student: In Chapter 10 he defines power, and in Chapter 8 he defines virtue, and it might be in the case of man it is very important to point out that the important thing about power is the relationship to other men, because men can't live well or can't get what they want unless there are other men around.

Strauss: But even that wouldn't necessarily require a comparing of men among each other. You are quite right--the beginning of the chapter is the power of a man; he speaks here of men and not of animals in general. But this doesn't follow from that.

Student: But men need to live with each other, but . . .

Strauss: But that's another matter. Now what is the precise point? What is Hobbes' fundamental notion of man? Can you say that according to Hobbes man is a self-moving and self-directing being? And if this is so, it is wholly unintelligible why man should be so antagonistic to each other, and therefore MacPherson says this antagonism comes in only by a minor premise which says society is of the character, namely a market society, and then the antagonism follows. This, I think, is simply wrong; that is not the fundamental concern here. The comparison point is one which MacPherson uses, but here we have it without reference to comparison. That is all I wanted to say.

Student: What do you make of Hobbes' dealing with subjects repeatedly. He deals with prudence in several different places.

Strauss: But prudence is discussed thematically in one chapter only.

Student: But he refers to it in . . .

Strauss: That is inevitable. Things come up again. A repetition is a problem only if it is an identical repetition. But Hobbes has also a didactic tendency. It would be a wonderful thing if someone with a familiarity with the literature would go over

all these enumerations, and compare them with earlier views. What is power, for example--the various forms of power.

We will cite here only a few examples. 57, paragraph 4.

Reader: "Forme is Power; because being a promise of Good, it recommendeth men to the favour of women and strangers."

Strauss: Why women and strangers? Good looks. Why does he limit that to women and strangers; why not to men? My guess is that the situation is very different in the case of women and strangers because they go by form more, and strangers have nothing else to go by, and men would not be unduly impressed by it.

Student: To go back to MacPherson and the minor premise very briefly, you said you rejected the focus of what Professor MacPherson said, but do you find the argument concerning Hobbes' bringing in the relative nature of power from the minor premise that it so happens that men's power tends to oppose itself. Do you think this was bad analysis?

Strauss: The analysis was surely insufficient, and I would grant MacPherson gladly, and I can do it so easily because I have said it before in print--you know, that is one part of scholarly life (inaudible)--that Hobbes can loosely be described as the theory of capitalist society is undoubtedly true. Labor is a commodity and many other things like this kind.

But the question is, if I try to defend Hobbes, I want to speak--I still respect his doctrine as the true political doctrine, and there is never any extraneous premise, like the character of the particular society in which he is living. Now I must at least give him this benefit and try to see whether he was in his way right. And looking at things from the point of view of what you can do with them, i.e., what is your kind of power, leads then to the possibility that a man contemplates himself in his power as primary, and therefore this is the (inaudible) deduction. There may be a grave defect in the starting point--that's another matter, but starting from this assumption that man is a rational animal, I think the whole doctrine of Hobbes follows. There are other contradictions; I know that, which have nothing to do with that, but which are also (inaudible) to him; for example, that he must say on the one hand, there are things which are intrinsically just and others which are intrinsically unjust, as we shall see very soon, and then on the other hand, he denies it is impossible to make an objective distinction between a king and a tyrant. This is very much a contradiction which is easy to understand. But this minimum of distinctions he could not possibly avoid. But the fundamental difficult, I believe, concerns his definition of man. So I would put it the other way around--the relation of Hobbes to Catholic society. Hobbes lays the theoretical foundation for Catholic society, but he is not dependent on a Catholic society preexisting, because to what extent did it exist in Hobbes' time. Hobbes had

much more to do with the gentry. What he said about the merchants is not very flattering.

Student: The transition from the absolute definition of power to the comparative definition of power is by virtue of the observation that men in power tend to oppose each other.

Strauss: Since man is essentially concerned with power, and then this concern implies contemplating himself in power, and this can then by a psychological (inaudible) become divorced from the practical solid meaning.

Now let us read where we left off--about sciences--the next paragraph.

Reader: "The Sciences, are small Power; because not eminent; and therefore, not acknowledged in any man; nor are at all, but in a few; and in them, but of a few things. For Science is of that nature, as none can understand it to be, but such as in a good measure have attained it.

Arts of publique use, as Fortification, making of Engines, and other Instruments of War; because they conferre to Defence, and Victory, are Power: And though the true Mother of them, be Science, namely the Mathematiques; yet, because they are brought into the Light, by the hand of the Artificer, they be esteemed (the Midwife passing with the vulgar for the Mother,) as his issue."

Strauss: That is a kind of complaining about the state of man. Now the next two paragraphs are along the lines of Mr. MacPherson's remarks. "The worth of a man is his Price; that is to say, so much as would be given for the use of his Power; and therefore is not absolute." But we must not forget one other thing which does not come out here. I take the clearest passages on page 206.

Reader: "Ignominy is the infliction of such evil as is made dishonourable, or the depravation of such good as is made honourable by the common-wealth."

Strauss: In other words, these things are purely relative because they are made honourable or dishonourable by the commonwealth. But he goes on.

Reader: "For there be some things honourable by nature as the effects of courage, magnanimity, strength, wisdom, and other abilities of body and mind."

Strauss: This is the old story that there are things which are by nature honourable, by nature noble. And Hobbes does not change this at all. And the experiment still exists. Try to replace these things here by their opposites, and they are in no way honourable. Cowardice, pusillanimity, weakness, folly, and they are no way in the world regarded as honourable.



For it can happen all the time that people are mistaken and regard a coward as a brave man, a fool as . . . and we know that. But then they are mistaken. So that is another limit to Hobbes' so-called relativism. They would probably give examples of societies in which these defects are (inaudible). Perhaps they find some evidence from some pride somewhere where it looks as if the people admired fools and cowards. Perhaps--I do not know.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: The reason being--the official reason being--that justice comes into being by contract. That is not a deliberate overstatement of Hobbes.

On page 59.

Reader: "All these wayes of Honouring, are naturall;"

Strauss: Are natural.

Reader: "And as well within, as without Common-wealths."

Strauss: Of course there are kinds of honor which are conventional; it goes without saying. But they are natural. This is, I think, absent from the present-day literature.

Page 60, paragraph two.

Reader: "All Actions, and Speeches, that proceed, or seem to proceed from much Experience, Science, Discretion, or Wit, are Honourable; For all these are Powers. Actions, or Words that proceed from Errour, Ignorance, or Folly, Dishonourable."

Strauss: You see a perfectly legitimate laxity of style that he doesn't repeat the "seem to" in the second case, but it is obviously understood.

On the same page, the second paragraph from the bottom, this we don't have to read, but it is his distinction between the honorable and the just. The Gods were honoured because of their greatness, but not because they were just.

There is a long discussion of coats of arms, (inaudible . . . ), but he regarded this apparently as very important, this discussion of the signs of human nobility. That's the point. It is all derived from government that there are no nobles (inaudible). Hobbes uses every opportunity for sowing some seeds of the truth, like that.

Now the next chapter is "Of the difference of Manners."  
And by manners he doesn't mean here how to use a fork and a knife, but those qualities of mankind that concern their living

together in peace. Now in the tenth chapter the point of view from which he looks at these things was that of honor, power, superiority, and inferiority, but here the point of view is a radically different one, because what we want is a commonwealth, i.e., an order of peace, and therefore we have to look at human nature also from the point of view of to what extent man has to give himself the possibility of living in peace, what makes for peace, and this is the point of view of this chapter.

Now the very powerful statement in the first two paragraphs we have already read on another occasion, and we unfortunately cannot do that again.

On the bottom of page 64, the great theme of immortal glory.

Reader: "Desire of Praise, disposeth to laudable actions, such as please them whose judgement they value; for of those men whom we contemn, we contemn also the Praises."

Strauss: This is not universally true. Truly vain people resent any giving of praises.

Reader: "Desire of fame after death does the same. And though after death, there be no sense of the praise given us on Earth, as being joyes, that are either swallowed up in the unspeakable joyes of Heaven, or extinguished in the extreme torments of Hell: yet is not such Fame vain; because men have a present delight therein from the foresight of it, and of the benefit that may redound thereby to their posterity: which though they now see not, yet they imagine; and any thing that is pleasure in the sense, the same also is pleasure in the imagination."

Strauss: The next paragraph I think is quite characteristic of Hobbes, and therefore I think we might read it.

Reader: "To have received from one, to whom we think our selves equall, greater benefits than there is hope to Requite, disposeth to counterfeit love; but really secret hatred; and puts a man into the estate of a desperate debtor, that in declining the sight of his creditor, tacitely wishes him there, where he might never see him more. For benefits oblige; and obligation is thralldome; and unrequitable obligation, perpetuall thralldome; which is to ones equall, hatefull. But to have received benefits from one, whom we acknowledge for superiour, enclines to love; because the obligation is no new depression:"

Strauss: In other words, they were depressed to begin with . . . no new depression.

Reader: "and cheerfull acceptation, (which men call Gratitude,) is such an honour done to the obliger, as is taken generally for retribution. Also to receive benefits, though from an equall, or inferiour, as long as there is hope of requitall, disposeth to love: for in the intention of the receiver, the obligation is of ayd, and service mutuall; from whence proceedeth an Emulation of who shall exceed in benefiting; the most noble and profitable contention possible; wherein the victor is pleased

with his victory, and the other revenged by confessing it."

Strauss: You see here noble--this is another indication of that other non-relativistic thing. This chapter has about six pages, and 2 1/2 of it are devoted to the consequences of ignorance of causes, (inaudible), and this is of course a preparation to the chapter on religion; that's very clear.

Reader: "Anxiety for the future time, disposeth men to enquire into the causes of things: because the knowledge of them, maketh men the better able to order the present to their best advantage."

Strauss: This differs from the statement about curiosity on page 35, where the emphasis was on the joy rather than the fear. So we can hardly call this curiosity if someone, out of fear for his life, finds out where his enemy is hiding. On page 35 the curiosity issue was followed immediately by religion, and there it was very dark what the connection is. The connection comes through here. So one must also be a little patient. Will you go on now?

Reader: "Curiosity, or love of the knowledge of causes, draws a man from consideration of the effect, to seek the cause; and again, the cause of that cause; till of necessity he must come to this thought at last, that there is some cause, whereof there is no former cause, but is eternall; which is it men call God. So that it is impossible to make any profound enquiry into naturall causes, without being enclined thereby to believe there is one God Eternall;"

Strauss: There is a qualification here--"enclined to believe"--he doesn't say without coming to know.

Reader: "though they cannot have any Idea of him in their mind, answerable to his nature. For as a man that is born blind, hearing men talk of warming themselves by the fire, and being brought to warm himself by the same, may easily conceive, and assure himselfe, there is somewhat there, which men call Fire, and is the cause of the heat he feeles; but cannot imagine what it is like; nor have an Idea of it in his mind, such as they have that see it; so also, by the visible things of this world, and their admirable order, a man may conceive there is a cause of them, which men call God; and yet not have an Idea, or Image of him in his mind."

Strauss: So idea and image are here used synonymously. The definition of religion on page 35, that is that the invisible power is such truly as he imagines it. There cannot be an image. In simple english, there cannot be a true religion; I think that is perfectly clear.

At the beginning of the next paragraph he begins to speak of the natural (inaudible) of religion, but he will speak about that in greater detail in the next chapter, and therefore we can drop that.

We can turn immediately to the first paragraph in the next chapter.

Reader: "Seeing there are no signes, nor fruit of Religion, but in Man onely; there is no cause to doubt, but that the seed of Religion, is also onely in Man; and consisteth in some peculiar quality, or at least in some eminent degree thereof, not to be found in other Living creatures."

Strauss: This has again to do with the question of the essential difference of man. Dogs may have a peculiar quality. Hobbes, as it were, says yes, but even if not, there is at least some eminent degree of equality in man, which in lower degrees may be found in animals. This is perfectly sufficient because, practically speaking, their degree may be sufficiently explained why men are antagonistic to each other, why goats are not antagonistic to each other.

And now the next paragraph.

Reader: "And first, it is peculiar to the Nature of Man, to be inquisitive into the Causes of the Events they see, some more, some lesse, but all men so much, as to be curious in the search of the causes of their own good and evill fortune."

Strauss: This is a crucial statement for Hobbes' interpretation of religion. The cause of inquiry is very limited, and is not a concern with causes of events, but with causes of good or evil fortune. Say not a gain of property or what have you, but look at it as good or evil fortune. Therefore, the cause which they seek must be one which is concerned with good or evil fortune of the individual in question. In other words, kind or unkind; he cannot be indifferent. The last consequence is that intending good or bad fortune are hypothesized as causes.

Student: The only question I have is is that a necessary conclusion? You say that at the least they are interested in the causes as good and evil fortune; they might be interested in more, and the title of that section . . .

Strauss: Sure, but if you go on you will see that the concern with causes of good or bad fortune are those peculiar to that. Let us go on.

Reader: "Secondly, upon the sight of any thing that hath a Beginning, to think also it had a cause, which determined the same to begin, then when it did, rather than sooner or later."

Strauss: Why is this so peculiar? But I believe what he has in mind is this--take the (inaudible) in the definition war. The progress of the (inaudible) can be perfectly understood in terms of the war situation. If I choose this example, I do not act entirely adequately because Hobbes knew this surely. But the beginning, somewhere on an island and brought to Athens (inaudible) stopped there more or less but for the housing shortage and other

things in Athens. The beginning has no connection with the war whatever (inaudible), that this was a punishment of Athens. I believe he means something of this nature. Otherwise, I do not see the emphasis on the beginning.

In the next paragraph you see also in the parentheses "(for the causes of good and evil fortune for the most part are invisible), but what he means of course is that they are infinite. A man can be killed for an infinite variety of causes; there cannot be a simple cause, as for example when you have a certain kind of disease, you can show a certain (inaudible) is the cause for it; this does not exist for good or evil fortune.

But the analysis of Hobbes as we would understand it is much more traditional than one would think on the basis of this emphasis on fortune, as you see from the last paragraph on page 70.

Reader: "This perpetuall feare, alwayes accompanying mankind in the ignorance of causes, as it were in the Dark, must needs have for object something. And therefore when there is nothing to be seen, there is nothing to accuse . . . "

Strauss: To accuse. These are not theoretical inquiries for the majority of men; they want something to accuse. When you think the cause of some theoretical inquiry, you don't have any intention of accusing.

Reader: " . . . either of their good, or evil fortune, but some Power, or Agent Invisible: In which sense perhaps it was, that some of the old Poets said, that the Gods were at first created by humane Feare: which spoken of the Gods, (that is to say, of the many Gods of the Gentiles) is very true."

Strauss: In other words, Hobbes does not really break with this tradition of Lucretian and other ancient poets that the gods are creatures of fear because that would still be true although Hobbes strikes somewhat a nicer point regarding luck.

Reader: "But the acknowledging of one God Eternall, Infinite, and Omnipotent, may more easily be derived, from the desire men have to know the causes of naturall bodies, and their severall vertues, and operations; than from the feare of what was to befall them in time to come. For he that from any effect hee seeth come to passe, should reason to the next and immediate cause thereof, and from thence to the cause of that cause, and plunge himselfe profoundly in the pursuit of causes; shall at last come to this, that there must be (as even the Heathen Philosophers confessed) one First Mover; that is, a First, and an Eternall cause of all things; which is that which men mean by the name of God: And this all without thought of their fortune;"

Strauss: You see this. The theoretical thing without any fortune leads to the truth; the other, which is peculiar to religion, does not.

Reader: "... the solicitude whereof, both enclines to fear, and hinders them from the search of the causes of other things; and thereby gives occasion of feigning of as many Gods, as there be men that feigne them."

Strauss: Now this argument would be generally stated as a Thomastic or Aristotelian argument, but he leaves it this way here, but in *De corpora*, a Latin book, published (inaudible), MacPherson's edition, he says the first mover must also be moved in a great and radical way--a moved mover. And the second point--one or more. Therefore, to the extent to which Hobbes admitted that there is a demonstration of the Christian thought, the god must not only be corporealistic, but also (inaudible).

The Leviathan is a popular version of Hobbes' thought, and we also have to read unpopular things.

Page 72 where he summarizes the four things.

Reader: "And in these foure things, Opinion of Ghosts, Ignorance of second causes, Devotion towards what men fear, and Taking of things Casuall for Prognostiques, consisteth the Naturall seed of Religion;"

Strauss: So that is the natural basis, and this natural seed has been propagated by two sorts of men, by pagans and biblical creatures. Pagan religion is a part of human politics, meaning religions are cultivated in order to make men more decent to the human government, and the biblical cultivation of religion is divine politics, and contains (inaudible) to see that the gods and the people are subject to the kingdom of God. But the root is the same. The question is only whether the biblical cultivation makes the seed more defective. That cannot be settled on the basis of this paragraph.

At the beginning of the last paragraph, you see--"Men, women, a Bird, a Crocodile, a Calf, a Dogge, a Snake, an Onion. . . ." The calf happens to be the center, and I think everyone knows why Hobbes thought of the calf--the golden calf, which he refers to on page 78, but this only as a very minor remark.

Page 74, at the end of the paragraph, he repeats again "and all such Vices, as amongst men are taken to be against Law, rather than against Honour." For example, to be very successful with women may be against the law but it is not regarded against honor in an older sense of honor.

On page 75 -- read the beginning of the paragraph only.

Reader: "And therefore the first Founders, and Legislators of Common-wealths amongst the Gentiles, whose ends were only to keep the people in obedience, and peace, have in all places taken care;"

Strauss: Only--there is no other end. I venture to add, although it needs a long argument to justify that, (inaudible). They have no other end but the end which men must pursue anyway, obedience to the government.

Reader: "And by these, and such other Institutions, they obtayned in order to their end, (which was the peace of the Common-wealth,)"

Strauss: In other words, the most sensible end that men can puruse.

Reader: "... that the common people in their misfortunes, laying the fault on neglect, or errour in their Ceremonies, or on their own disobedience to the lawes, were the lesse apt to mutiny against their Governors. And being entertained with the pomp, and pastime. . . ."

Strauss: I believe you have heard that in our age, too. Of very great importance is page 77, the second paragraph.

Reader: "From the propagation of Religion, it is not hard to understand the causes of the resolution of the same into its first seeds, or principles; which are only an opinion of a Deity, and Powers . . . ."

Strauss: A story of a resolution is told at the end of the book-- the resolution of the Roman church in various sects, the first of Henry VIII, the second (inaudible).

Reader: "invisible, and supernaturall; that can never be so abolished out of humane nature, but that new Religions may againe be made to spring out of them, by the culture of such men, as for such purpose are in reputation."

Strauss: What does he imply? Doesn't he simply say, cannot be abolished? May again be made to spring out, but needn't be. In other words, as far as I know Hobbes is the first who regarded a strictly nonreligious society as popular.

A younger contemporary of Hobbes, the French Hügeonot, (inaudible), is the first man who wrote a book that an areligious society is possible. People (inaudible) still maintain a society at large is not possible without religion. In Hobbes we have the fundamental thought already here. He says "the seeds . . . . can never be so abolished out of human nature, but that new Religions may againe . . . ."

At the beginning of the next paragraph he talks about all formed religion.

Reader: "For seeing all formed Religion. . . ."

Strauss: Formed religion is distinguished of course from the seeds. Now letus look at the next paragraph.

Reader: "That which taketh away the reputation of Wisedome, in him that formeth a Religion,"

Strauss: The seeds of a religion are of course not the religion.

At the end he says they may be reduced to one and the same cause; "and that is, unpleasing Priests; and those not onely amongst Catholiques, but even in that Church that hath presumed most of Reformation."

On page 456 when he discusses how the Christian order was established, and then how was this established--will you read that?

Reader: "And therefore the analysis or resolution is by the same way, but beginneth with a knock that would last (inaudible), as we may see in the dissolution (inaudible) political church government in England. First, the power of the Pope was dissolved totally by Queen Elizabeth; and the bishops, who before exercised their functions in right of the Pope, did afterwards exercise the same in right of the Queen and her successors; though by retaining the phrase of iuro divino, they were thought to demand by immediate right from God, and so was untied the third knot. After this, the Presbyterians lately in England came to putting down the (inaudible) and so is the second knot dissolved. And almost at the same time the power was taken also from the Presbyterians, and so we are reduced . . . "

Strauss: We. Hobbes is here speaking as an Englishman under Cromwell.

Reader: "to primitive Christians to follow (inaudible), every man that (inaudible), which if it be without contention and without measuring the doctrine of Christ by our affection to the person of his minister, the fault which the Apostle represents . . . "

Strauss: "is perhaps the best." He couldn't go beyond that.

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: There was such a thing called humanism, and which was very powerful and was then superceded by the new philosophy of science. I do not remember now--I think somewhere Hobbes refers to More, but he doesn't speak of him much. The Hobbian position was prepared not only by (inaudible), which was the Christian position, but by this school of men called politicians. And their view is simply that the peace of the commonwealth is an absolutely overriding consideration, and we judge the question of uniformity strictly on practical problems. In other words, it is better to have uniformity, but that means of course any uniformity. But if there is already a certain variety, if the variety of religions has already made headway, then it might very well be wise to tolerate it, and so to take the sting out of it. In other words, the principle defence of tolerance was simply a political convenience. That was, I believe, the Hobbian position, but Hobbes saw in England the possibility of a perfect (inaudible) and the successors of Hobbes followed this, because



then they had something which in Hobbes is not even alluded to, possibly in the beginning, but this became very powerful a generation ago, and that was the Dutch experience. The Dutch seemed to show that toleration is not only politically feasible, but economically most desirable. And the man who founded economics in our sense of the word, Sir William Petty, was a younger friend of Hobbes, and his key example was the (inaudible), where you had all kinds of religions in perfect toleration--well, of course not so perfect, but say tolerant--and these people became richer every day. And later on at the time of the French Revolution, when you read some of the smaller writings of Kant, you see that quite clear. There are two big forces--religion, which is divisive, and divisive within the country and among countries, and then there is something else which unites men and that is trade. The issue was simply trade versus religion. Of course this is reflected also in England. The fact that Locke was co-founder of the Bank of England is of course rich in invitation. The church, Church of England--Tory--and the Bank of England--the Whig. That was a nasty political expression, but beyond it was a great theoretical change. If people are more interested in the goods of this world, then people become less interested in the goods of the other life, and they will not slit each other's throat. That was a good-natured (inaudible); we have seen that if we have change very radically, people still slit each other's throat. It was an amazing prejudice which was very powerful, (inaudible).

The argument that republics don't wage war and only the monarchists do--and Hamilton simply looked at history books and saw that the Republic of Rome and the Republic of Carthage and some other things were dedicated to war. These things are a bit more complicated; it's a parallel; (inaudible).

I would say this is the context in which one must consider the fact alluded to by MacPherson, (inaudible), which shows itself in the concern with trade, in the concern with industry, with the production of things which are conducive to delectation. If you read in De cive the chapter on the duties of government, government in the ordinary books of the time refers to (inaudible), and instead you have a government taking care of science and industry and contributing to delectation. This was of course a terrific event in the last century, and I do not know whether you see it as clearly in this country as I saw it in Germany, when all the universities--the old ones--even those founded in the 19th century--had one characteristic which distinguished them from universities founded after the first World War. The latter had a division of the social sciences; the former had a divinity program. There was no co-existence, and I found that as a symbol of that great change and if we want to understand it, we must surely study such books as the Leviathan. But these people who are in a way very good-natured and kind men who simply say well, Hobbes was erratic as a religious man, but fundamentally was a religious man, this good-naturedness is intellectually bad because it continues the revision, and therefore while we praise the good-naturedness, we blame the (inaudible).

Student: Could I ask you a question on religion? Did Hobbes write somewhat similar to Plato . . . (inaudible).

Strauss: Hobbes says almost anything, (inaudible), but this little thing nevertheless is of some importance. Just as you will find today a man who takes all issues along the communist line, but will be very careful to say I am a communist, (inaudible). So similarly Hobbes would say there is no God; that would create an uproar which his statement that God is necessarily body cannot create, because especially when (inaudible) speak of (inaudible), a heretical church father who had said God must be a body; the only thing which he retracted in 1668 was his theory regarding trinity, because in the Latin Leviathan most of this (inaudible) trinity; so he gave of course an explanation. (Inaudible . . . ). The most obvious example is that Spinoza denies the possibility of miracles, which Hobbes never does. Hobbes only says miracles (inaudible). To say miracles are impossible is a much harsher statement than to say miracles cannot be known. So in other words, there is a difference; there's no question. The reticenses of Hobbes are very small, (inaudible).

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Hobbes does not write this way. Hobbes is not concerned with making his reader think, so he is more concerned with their being thoughtful than with holding these and these opinions in the (inaudible) of proper candor. I mean not of a party. Hobbes holds no particular allegiance either to the crown or someone else.

Hobbes surely had a notion of a fundamental change which must come, but which could come on the basis of modern science, and a lot of people call it today a radically secularized society, with much more benefit for the human race.

I think Hobbes' (inaudible) are all due to sheer fear of the sword of the sovereign, and he was not ashamed of that.

Lecture VII  
Seminar on Hobbes; January 26, 1964

(The tape for the first half of this lecture was garbled, and thus was not able to be transcribed.)

Reader: ". . . but the dictates of reason."

Strauss: Applied reason. All right. He omitted that.

Reader: "So as unless a man endeavors to preserve the faculty of right reasoning, he cannot observe the laws of nature. It is manifest that he who knowingly or willingly does ought whereby the rational faculty may be destroyed or weakened, he knowingly and willingly breaks the law of nature, for there is no difference between a man who performs not his duties and him who does such things willingly and maketh it comfortable for him to do it. For they destroy and weaken the reasoning faculty who do that which distrubs the mind from its natural state."

Strauss: Here he means natural state in the old sense; in Latin it is the healthy state, the perfect state. I think, if I am not mistaken, this is the only case in which Hobbes uses this.

Reader: "that which most manifestly happens to drunkards and (inaudible). We therefore (inaudible) in the twentieth way against the law of nature (inaudible)."

Strauss: He omits here (inaudible). But what he is trying to do here is to deduce from this principle of peace not only justice and gratitude, but also temperance. Later on there is another remark at the end of paragraph 32 in De cive where he changes that somewhat. But the final view is stated in de homina, and that is that temperance and courage are not moral virtues proper because they are not directly required by the demand of peace. Virtue is to be reduced strictly to justice and its king in the narrower sense. Private virtues, all virtues convening in the perfection of the individual, have no longer a secure status.

This is of course a vice of utilitarianism proper, too, and John Stuart Mill himself tried to alter it, but in different (inaudible), I believe.

Now let us turn to page 103 in the Leviathan, second paragraph.

Reader: "And though this may seem too subtile a deduction of the . . ."

Strauss: May I say one word here. Natural law, in order to be obligatory, must be promulgated to every man. Hobbes has now given these long deductions of the many natural laws. How can a daily maid or spinster, to quote Locke, know these deductions? And Hobbes says, oh, they can. And this paragraph is given . . .

Reader: "Lawes of Nature, to be taken notice of by all men; whereof the most part are too busie in getting food, and the rest too negligent to understand; yet to leave all men unexcusable; they have been contracted into one easie sum, intelligible, even to the meanest capacity; and that is, Do not that to another, which thou wouldst not have done to thy selfe;"

Strauss: Everyone can understand that. Let us turn to page 85, to see the bearing of this remark.

Reader: "This is that law of the Gospel, whatsoever you require that others should do to you, that do ye to them, and that law of all men, that which you would not have done to you, do not unto another."

Strauss: In other words, only the second is the law of all men, i.e., a natural law. Do you know whom we have to think of when reading this passage? Rousseau, in the second Discourse when he speaks of these key formulations, and the one he calls the sublime rule, the rule of the Gospel, and the other he calls the more useful. That is the same.

Then there is a very important passage toward the end of Chapter 15 about the whole meaning of moral philosophy, on page 104, which is in a way more explicit in De cive, 3, paragraph 31-32.

I wanted to say this only in passing--in Leviathan, 103, the first paragraph when he speaks of temperance or its opposite, he says which the law of nature has also forbidden, but are not mentioned nor pertinent enough to display, so temperance and courage fall also under the law of nature, but are not pertinent. In De Homina he says they are not moral virtues because they are not directly related to peace.

Student: Is it at all conceivable that this was already thought out beforehand because of what he says in the introduction to De cive, that he thought through his system before he wrote (inaudible) . . . ?

Strauss: That cannot refer possibly to every detail. A man can not anticipate what will occur to him when he elaborates. This can only refer to the general outline. It is undeniable that Hobbes stated the issue differently in De cive than he did in De Homina, and he changed his mind. And in this respect he became more consistent, reducing all virtues to social virtue and narrowly conceived.

Now let us read the discussion of Aristotelian moral philosophy, page 104, paragraph 3.

Reader: "And the Science of them, is the true and onely Moral Philosophy. For Morall Philosophy is nothing else but the Science of what is Good, and Evill, in the conversation, and Society of man-kind. Good, and Evill, are names that signifie our Appetites, and Aversions; which in different tempers, customes, and doctrines of men, are different: And divers men, differ not

onely in their Judgement, on the senses of what is pleasant, and unpleasant to the tast, smell, hearing, touch and sight; but also of what is comformable, or disagreeable to Reason, in the actions of common life. Nay, the same man, in divers times, differs from himselfe; and one time praiseth, that is, calleth Good, what another time he dispraiseth, and calleth Evill: From whence arise Disputes, Controversies, and at last War. And therefore so long a man is in the condition of meer Nature, (which is a condition of War,) as private Appetite is the measure of Good, and Evill:"

Strauss: One second. Ethical relativism, without anybody's (inaudible). But now he goes on.

Reader: "And consequently all men agree on this."

Strauss: End of the ethical relativism.

Reader: "that Peace is Good, and therefore also the way, or means of Peace, which (as I have shewed before) are Justice, Gratitude, Modesty, Equity, Mercy, & the rest of the Laws of Nature, are good; that is to say, Morall Vertues; and their contrarie Vices, Evill. Now the science of Vertue and Vice, is Morall Philosophie; and therefore the true Doctrine of the Lawes of Nature, is the true Morall Philosophie. But the Writers of Morall Philosophie, though they acknowledge the same Vertues and Vices; Yet not seeing wherein consisted their Goodnesse; nor that they come to be praised, as the meanes of peaceable, sociable, and comfortable living; place them in a mediocrity of passions: as if not the Cause, but the Degree of daring, made Fortitude; or not the Cause, but the Quantity of a gift, made Liberality."

Strauss: This is obviously against Aristotle, but it becomes perfectly clear what the cause of the virtue is, peaceable, sociable, and comfortable living. What is required for them is virtue, and (inaudible). But can one say that Aristotle makes the degree of daring as distinguished from the cause, or does he? He means of course that Aristotle says that virtue is (inaudible) a mean, something quantitative, not too liberally, not too much, and therefore whereas Hobbes goes deeper into the matter, not starting from accident, like quantity, but going to cause, has discovered the true moral philosophy. Now nothing less is implied in this paragraph.

Now what is the situation? Is it true that the degree alone makes it a virtue? Is it sufficiently defined by Aristotle as the means. If the mean is the mean, is not a glutton, nor a man who starves out of a kind of diversion, is this sufficient for making him a truly temperate man? So Aristotle is of course concerned with the cause, and the cause is to do the noble thing because it is noble. Whether Hobbes did consider this, I do not know, but he surely does not mention it.

There is another point I would like to mention, and this is stated more clearly in De cive, paragraph 31, the beginning, that the natural law is the same as the moral law is agreed upon

by all writers. Therefore, Hobbes concludes that natural law and moral philosophy are identical. Now what about this statement? What does this mean? What does this mean prior to Hobbes, that the natural law is the same as the moral law?

I will state now what I believe it means primarily, and those with theoretical training must correct me if I am wrong. As far as I know, the moral law comes strictly from the Christian tradition as in the Old Testament, especially on the distinction between the ceremonial law, the judicial law, and the moral law. So that the moral law would mean a part of the Old Testament legislation. This part of the Old Testament legislation is then identified in principle, and it is by no means as simple as Hobbes presents it, with the natural law. Is this correct? Does not the moral law primarily refer to the Old Testament? The Ten Commandments and such things?

Student: Yes, they are, the Ten Commandments are included as natural law.

Strauss: But are they not also the moral law?

Student: I've never heard it put quite that way.

Strauss: That is my understanding, but would you please go into that for me? Good. And now, . . . yes?

Student: That line you drew between ethical relativism, and then the end of it, breaking off (inaudible), do you mean by that in the condition of nature that the natural laws are relative?

Strauss: There can be no question that cruelty or arrogance are bad. You cannot act on them because it would be unsafe to act on them. They are not subjective. So if I say, to spit someone in the face is an act of modesty, I talk nonsense. Modesty means modesty. On the one hand, Hobbes does, if one wants to use these abominable terms, that Hobbes thinks as a (inaudible) leads to a new kind of authority, because you cannot know society is possible if everyone acts on what he thinks at the moment to be good. That can be done on relatively harmless things, but that cannot be done on matters regarding (inaudible) which are truly of public concern.

And now the last paragraph of the chapter.

Reader: "These dictates of Reason, men use to call by the name of Lawes, but improperly: for they are but Conclusions, or Theoremes concerning what conduceth to the conservation and defence of themselves; wheras Law, properly is the word of him, that by right hat command over others. But yet if we consider the same Theoremes, as delivered in the word of God, that by right commandeth all things; then are they properly called Lawes."

Strauss: This has a long history. In the medieval discussions you find summaries of this. There was a school in the Middle Ages which said that the natural law does not have the character

of law properly so-called, but it is only indicative. That is what this means. In other words, it indicates what is right or wrong, good or bad, but it does not as such command it. This is what Hobbes means. In another writing of his, in the English work, Volume 4, page 125, Hobbes says (and that is very much what he says here) that these dictates of reason are as such theories pending to be, and those uncertain, being but conclusions of particular men, and therefore not properly law. Now if we take this uncertain out of the context, then you say of course there are (inaudible) relativism, and the only thing which transcends it is the civil law. Hobbes, I think, sometimes wrote in this way in order to make sure that the only thing you have to know as a citizen or subject is to obey the civil law, which is a very crude statement, sufficient for many practical purposes, (inaudible).

I must say a few words about Chapter 16 which ends the first part of the Leviathan. This didn't exist in the Citizen, dealing with "Of Persons, Authors, and things Personated." In order to understand the importance of this chapter, we only have to look at page 112, the definition of a commonwealth.

A common-wealth is "One Person, of whose Acts a great Multitude, . . . have made themselves every one the Author." The state, the commonwealth, is a person. And therefore in order to explain that, Hobbes wrote this chapter. Now this is another innovation of Hobbes. When you look at the other definitions of the state, at least in all the previous authors whom I have looked at, never wrote person in the definition of state. In the Elements of Law, Part II, Chapter 8, Paragraph 7n, Hobbes states: "Though in the charters of subordinate corporations, a corporation may either care to be one person in law, yet the same has not been taken also in the body of common-wealth or city, nor as any of those innumerable writers of politics observed any such union."

So this is truly one of Hobbes' . . . in other words, the term person was commonplace in legal literature, but so to speak it applied only to private law, not to public law. Methodically, the problem is the same as that of prescription, which is a very common legal term in private law, but as far as the law was applied to the commonwealth, only by Burke, who gave it an importance which it never had.

Now why is Hobbes in need of understanding the state or common-wealth as a Person? In 107 at the end of the fourth paragraph.

Reader: "A Multitude of men, are made One Person, when they are by one man, or one Person, Represented; so that it be done with the consent of every one of that Multitude in particular. For it is the Unity of the Representer, not the Unity of the Represented, that maketh the Person One. And it is the Representer that beareth the Person, and but one Person: And Unity, cannot otherwise be understood in Multitude."

Strauss: In other words, the problem which concerns Hobbes is how can there be a unity of the multitude, except if there is not a one which represents the whole multitude? This person is of course a faint or artificial person, as Hobbes mentions in the beginning of the chapter. By nature they are only individuals, i.e., many; there is no unity. The unity is derived from the individuals. The author is the individual. The public or political is derivative from the private. The individual becomes as much as possible subject to that whole. That is the meaning. They are in a way swallowed up in the whole. They are the creators and caught up in the creation, and this is the meaning of the concept of the state as person in Hobbes.

In other words, the unity is derivative from the individual, i.e., there is no common good in its own right. Peace is a common good, but this can become a derivative of the common good only from the will of the individuals. To that extent, . . . One can also say that it follows that a (inaudible) of natural sociality leading to the clear-cut distinction between the individual and society, and this taken together with the fact that Hobbes must provide a legal doctrine, leads to the concept of person.

I have to say something about MacPherson. . .

Student: Could you restate the reason why there is no common good.

Strauss: Because if there were a common good, this common good could be established to provide the unity. Peace is a common good; there's no question. But this common good--the emphasis for Hobbes of this common good is that it is only for the sake of the individual, not understood as members of society and dependent entirely on their will. The state is a fantastic beast if it is there only for the service of the individual, and it cannot be that servant without being the absolute master. This is a parallel. The state is a person. Whatever the state says, whatever the state wills, is my will, my private, individual will. My long-range will is completely swallowed up in the will of the state.

Now regarding MacPherson, let me speak first and perhaps only for today on this morals of society. You may recall MacPherson's general (inaudible), the fundamental syllogism of Hobbes has two premises. The major premise concerns man's nature and as he says, man is a self-moving and self-directing animal, and then this would lead to the consequence that men are selfish, but it would not lead to the consequence that they are antagonistic. The antagonism comes in through a (inaudible) which states that society has necessarily this character of antagonism. What he calls market society, capitalistic society.

I think it is impossible to leave it at this definition of man because then men would be the same as moose, and Hobbes allows at least that men are by degree different from moose, namely that they are rational. I am sure if one takes this rationality in the way in which Hobbes takes it, one can deduce from that the



antagonism. Man is the only being which can be concerned with power, and can therefore be concerned with contemplating himself in this power. Now that this latter, this contemplating of power, is foolish, silly, does not do away with the fact that it is essentially a possibility belonging to man as the only beast that is hungry from future hunger, i.e., which seeks power for power.

Now let us forget about that and consider MacPherson's theory regarding the market society. MacPherson admits that the morals of society of which he speaks in this chapter were unknown to Hobbes. Of course they were unknown. But he knew that England was in fact a possessive market society. What does he say?-- "All the evidence points then to the 17th century English society having become essentially a market society." "The question remains, how far was Hobbes aware of this." And he says he was sufficiently aware of it. But not of course fully. Now what is the key point?

For example, he takes Hobbes' rejection of commutative justice and the assertion that labor is a commodity like any other commodity, and Hobbes agrees with that. But there is a fundamental ambiguity in MacPherson which I would like to take up.

What does that moral mean? It could mean present-day society in England and thereabouts is a market society. This of course would not make the possessive market society normal for Hobbes. And on what grounds? In other words, does the ground that England was a possessive market society at the time and Hobbes knew it, would this make it a normal society for Hobbes? I would say no, on the ground that you would find easily in Leviathan, page 241, paragraph two, the end of the second part, in which Hobbes makes clear that what he is doing is what Plato tried to do in the Republic, to teach what should be, the rational, and not merely say what is. The other possibility would be that Hobbes said that every society is essentially a possessive market society. This is surely not what MacPherson means; he makes it quite clear--for example, on page 57; he doesn't make it quite clear--for example, he says "Had it been so, Hobbes could scarcely have treated society as such, as essentially a series of market relations, as he did in Leviathan and the other theoretical treatises." And one more, on page 87, "There is no alternative to the market society; every society is a market society." But he says also on the other hand that "There are further indications in Behemoth that he saw competitive market relations as an encroachment on a model of earlier English society."

Now if a market society changes, differs, from another kind of market society, still it cannot be the kind of society. So this he cannot consistently maintain. Now what then does he mean? I think he means this, that according to Hobbes, every rational society, every good society, is a possessive market society. This is the only (inaudible) which is in principle defended, but how do we go from here.

If the possessive market society is the rational society, the good society, then Hobbes must show cause why it is the good society.

Where can this ground be found? Only in the nature of man. Therefore, it would be necessary for Hobbes to deduce the rationality or goodness of the market society from what we know about the nature of man. It cannot be an independent minor premise. And one can say that to the extent to which Hobbes does accept the possessive market society, he does deduce about the nature of man. But there are other considerations.

MacPherson quotes other passages in which Hobbes surely disapproved of the possessive market society, just as Adam Smith later on disapproved of certain features of the merchant class. So, to repeat, MacPherson has not made clear the key point--what does it mean that for Hobbes the possessive market society is the normal society? It can mean surely these three things--predominantly (inaudible), the essential character of every society, and three, the rational society, the good society.

The first that one can say to some extent about the possessive market society (inaudible) the long appendage in which he shows that many people of that time were simply wage laborers. I also do not care particularly about it because this would be wholly uninteresting because England might have been a capitalistic country at the time, but that doesn't prove that Hobbes would have approved of it. Think of Carlyle and (inaudible) and other 19th century English writers, when England was much more of a capitalist society, and they were not in agreement with it.

So this is, I think, only a sign of MacPherson's half-mastery, but softly restated, (inaudible), and I only do not believe that this argument is valid.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: We discussed this earlier. He says the state of nature is nonsense, to state it very simply. Let us therefore rewrite Hobbes, but then what you get is no longer Hobbes, because Hobbes' doctrine stands in full with the state of nature doctrine, i.e., he regards Rousseau's criticism of the state of nature as Hobbes meant it as absolutely sound. Now then his notion of Hobbes' doctrine must then be from the very beginning a figment of his imagination, and then it becomes, radically stated, man is by nature a self-moving, self-directing being, i.e., an animal. And then he says this explains man's selfishness but not his antagonism. And the antagonism cannot be deduced from this notion of human nature; therefore, it must have another source. And the most natural source for a social theory is of course a model of society. Hence, we have to find out what model of society was to him; answer: the possessive market society, and then there is some evidence, and by the way always known, you know that modern capitalism begins more or less there, and a statement about labor, a commodity like any other, is very revealing; there is no question about that.

I must say that I am not the first to say that; it has been said before, probably by Marx himself, and I believe I quoted something from Behemoth in Chapter 7 of my book, but whatever mistakes I may have committed then, because I was much younger,

surely this is not proper interpretation. You can refer to these social conditions only secondarily, after you have shown that Hobbes' doctrine is unreasonable, untenable. Then you can say how come a man of such a good mind made this error? (Inaudible.) And therefore the possessive market society is a part of Hobbes' teaching. To that extent I would agree with MacPherson. But the locus of it is not an independent postulate, but a consequence of human nature. Needless to say, he is completely silent or almost completely silent about fear of violent death, which is a grave thing in Hobbes, as everyone knows, but also when you read his refutation of Aristotle in the second paragraph of the first chapter of De cive, when he speaks to prove that men are antagonistic toward each other, there is not a single market phenomenon mentioned. What he does is (inaudible) when people are assembled; now it is perfectly clear that this happens not only in possessive market societies. (Inaudible . . . ) These were the things that impressed Hobbes at least as much as what merchants do.

Page 57 bottom--there is a remark of his. "I have shown that Hobbes' argument from the physiological nature of man." Which is of course a misleading expression. In the Greek sense of physiology, it is correct, but not in the present use. "To the attempt of all men to seek ever more power over others requires the proposition that every man's power (inaudible)." So this proposition, even if deduced supposedly from a physiological point, that all men innately desire ever more power over others, requires at least the further assumption of a model of society which permits continual peaceful invasion of each by each. Now if he means something about property rights and so on, he may be right, but in the sense in which Hobbes means it, it is of course common to all societies. Think of the slaves and their master. Is it not possible that they would compete among themselves for the favor of their master. Of course. They might get only a larger piece of meat, but for these men under these conditions, that is at least as important as it would be for two men running for the presidency and who will become the president.

He looks at this problem of human competition entirely from the point of view of competition, as it is now ordinarily understood, namely, economic competition, and this is a narrowing of what Hobbes meant. Because what Hobbes is concerned with is that men need government to establish peace, and this requires that men are rather nasty, antagonistic toward each other, and that has nothing to do with any particular social arrangement.

There have been doctrines long before Hobbes' time that simple people, say South Sea Islanders, they are free from all nastiness--you must have heard that, too, but these doctrines were of course known to Hobbes. There was a Golden Age, the description where all men were equal and liked that equality, ate acorns, and had no desire for more, and Hobbes simply rejected that, both against reason and against experience. There would be traces of that, in England, even in 1540, and he didn't find such traces.

Lecture VIII  
Seminar on Hobbes: January 29, 1964

(The tape for the first half of this lecture was garbled, and thus was not able to be transcribed.)

Strauss: Hobbes discusses here in paragraph two three possible motives: glory, benefits, and fear. The only one which makes men social is fear. Hobbes has a long argument--glory does not make man social, i.e., glory implies superiority; glory cannot be shared. So glory is out. Also, gain is also out because you have much more of an agreement by dominion, Hobbes says, than by sharing. Therefore, the only thing which remains is fear.

What Hobbes presupposes all the time is that society is a society of equals. Now the assertion that fear should bring men together is in one way of course very strange. Fear would seem to isolate people and drive them away from each other; Hobbes says no, that fear is a much more subtlety than the ordinary thing. Fear includes the fear of fear, i.e., fear, if it understands itself, includes the provision that we do not have the fear again, and then you must make this arrangement, the fear to end all fears. That is really so--within the limits of the possible--and that leads to the establishment of government, an effective government.

Hobbes admits of course in the first note that men cannot live and live well without society. He admits that. Man is so construed that he cannot live and live well without society. This is completely compatible with the fact, overemphasized by Hobbes, that most men are most of the time rather beastly. How can man be so concerned with superiority toward others if he were not attached in a perverse way to the others? Men who were wholly indifferent toward the other things about them would not be completely free from that (inaudible). The question is what prompts Hobbes in this direction? And this cannot be explained merely by Hobbes' psychology, because of the fact that these principles developed by Hobbes affected quite a few thinkers who had an entirely different psychology. There must be something else.

What is behind it, when you read the polemics against man's natural benevolence? That is a good-natured, superficial view, and he of course will not tolerate that. And of course, in particular, no belief in divine providence, which is only one form of this good nature. Man himself must take care of himself. Nature is not a kind master.

These are the things which came to play a great role in modern times. Now (inaudible) has given an interpretation of modern political thought in terms of philosophy, and there is an element of truth in that. The doctrine which he means is a distinction between the good god and the creator of the earth, (inaudible). (Inaudible), the creator of the earth, is bad. So the world to which we belong by the fact that we are creatures is radically

evil. Something of this kind is truly a part of the modern doctrine. This creates great difficulty because the forces which man uses in order to fight certain other (inaudible) are themselves given by (inaudible). The only elegant way out of it is to say that man is the conqueror of nature, that is, himself.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: The fundamental moral phenomenon for Hobbes is the right to self-preservation. That is the only natural right, but this right is an absolute right. So when a man is condemned to death, he does not lose that right. If he killed the dog, he acts according to natural right. If this is not an extreme individualism, I do not know what is.

Student: I don't understand how he can insist that this man cannot give this right of self-preservation to the sovereign, and yet on the other hand, when a man contracted this out, he must give up all his rights.

Strauss: No, no. Hobbes makes it very clear.

Now the key point which he makes in paragraph three is that men are by nature unequal, or rather they are equal, and the reason which he gives here is really marvelous in the De cive. Everyone can kill everybody else. That is to say, everyone can do the gravest to everybody else, and therefore they are equal. If they are unequal in other respects, these qualities do not compare with this. You pointed out that in the Leviathan he also says men are intellectually equal. Let us read only the last passage on page \_\_\_\_.

Reader: "But this proveth that men are in that point equal than unequal. They will hardly believe there be so many so wise as themselves for they see their wit at the hands of other men's (inaudible); but this proveth rather in that point that men are equal, for there is not ordinarily a greater side of the equal distribution of everything than that every man is contented with his share."

Strauss: Do you have an idea where this argument comes from? Descartes. And in Descartes it is manifestly ironic. If Hobbes should have been so humorous to write this without irony, then one would simply say, all the worse for him, because (inaudible).

So the key argument for Hobbes regarding equality is surely that which he gives also here, but most of it in paragraph 3 of the third chapter of De cive.

Student: I find it a very charming argument . . .

Strauss: Charming, yes. But you admit that charming is not necessarily true.

Now in the next case he discusses two things, (inaudible). Now the question is what about that desire, the desire for unnecessary things which has nothing to do with vanity. Now I believe the problem can only be solved in this way. You have either irrational pride or rational fear, but on the other hand, self-preservation needs means, you know, stones. But there is something else; there is no earthly reason why you should not have a drink of cream or milk instead of water. In brief, self-preservation naturally expands into comfortable self-preservation. Why should you preserve yourself uncomfortably if you can preserve yourself comfortably?

Now, what Hobbes implies is this. If you insist on comfortable self-preservation, you have a weaker cause than if you insist on straight self-preservation. Because you obviously expose yourself to attack much more (inaudible). In other words, there is a kind of desire for non-necessary things which is not identical with self-preservation, but which is a possible and conditionally legitimate expression of self-preservation. I think that was the formula of Locke. Comfortable self-preservation is too good, and this reminds us of the fact that in both cases they are bodily comfort, and the other things which are so bad are vanity and pride, because these are wholly unsubstantial. Solid comfort (inaudible).

And so the schema is this. The most important, absolutely fundamental, and overriding consideration is guaranteeing life and limb, but then if it is feasible, as much solid comfort as possible.

There are many more things which we didn't discuss at all. This chapter on contracts. This follows--only to remind you of the order, we have the right of everybody against everybody, an unbearable condition, because in such a condition everyone's life is always in fear, and therefore the only way out is peace. Therefore, the fundamental law of nature as distinguished from the right of nature is keep peace. This follows. Now this is the law of nature, i.e., something which restricts us, whereas the right of nature entitles us, and therefore Hobbes says at the beginning of Chapter 14, that right and law are opposites. A right giving us a title to, and a law limiting us. And the right comes first. There is a fundamental inalienable right which cannot be denied. It is truly inalienable. He makes it quite clear in Chapter 14 when he discusses, here, page 86 bottom, not all rights are alienable. "A man cannot lay down the right of resisting them that assault him by force." (Inaudible.) But people who are wholly disassociated, how can they have peace? Peace is the simplest case of a common good. So there is then a need for peace, but these are people yet who cannot become good because they are not yet a community. Therefore, they must unite, and union can only take place by contract. Therefore, the first law of nature is keep contract. And of course the contract underlying all other contracts is a contract which we make for renting a piece of land or whatever it may be, and this is of course possible only if there

is in the first place the fundamental contract by which the other contracts are guaranteed. And then there follow other things, for example, you might be nice; if you are nasty, you hurt people all the time, and they are moral virtues. We will discuss them the next time in Chapter 15.

But the point which one cannot stress strong enough -- the natural right comes before the natural law. The natural law is derivative from natural right. And that has never happened before Hobbes. And that is the deepest change in the whole natural law tradition because it was always understood formerly that the obligation comes first before the right comes. Now the order is radically changed.

In Descartes, Passions of the Soul, Chapter dealing with generosity, the key virtue, Descartes uses a word, the right. You see, they are very different men, Descartes and Hobbes.

Lecture IX  
Seminar on Hobbes, February 2, 1964

Strauss: Now let us turn to our text--right at the beginning of Chapter 17. Let us read the first paragraph.

Reader: "The final cause, End, or Designe of men, (who naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others,) in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, (in which wee see them live in Common-wealths,) is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented life thereby; that is to say, of getting themselves out from that miserable condition of Warre, which is necessarily consequent (as hath been shewn) to the naturall Passions of men, when there is no visible Power to keep them in awe, and tye them by feare of punishment to the performance of their Covenants, and observation of those Lawes of Nature set down in the fourteenth and fifteenth Chapters."

Strauss: Here you see the natural passions of man without any distinction are opposed to the foresight of man's preservation. Foresight and reason. Passion and reason is the fundamental distinction, and the state of nature characterized by the rule of passion, and the civil society is the state, and to that extent it is the state of reason. But as Hobbes makes clear immediately in the sequel, the natural passions of men where there is so little power to tie them by fear of punishment, so one passion or some passions belongs to the foresight. The foresight and (inaudible) belong together, and the formulation in De cive when Hobbes speaks of fear. Fear means also provision against fear, or fear of fear.

In the next paragraph, when he speaks of the laws of nature, which men must perform only in civil society, but in war there is something else--at the bottom of this page--"laws of honour; that is, to abstain from cruelty, leaving to men their lives, and instruments of husbandry." This is also stated in the second paragraph of Chapter V of De cive. The difference between laws of nature which are the demands of justice, we can say, and the laws of honour--this dualism corresponds to what Hobbes says in page 85 or thereabouts about the two things which induce men to be decent--fear of violent death, and honour. "A certain nobleness or gallantness of courage." So this distinction is to be found in De cive and therefore the generosity business, the gallantry, is not simply due to the inklings of Descartes.

Student: A few days ago you made a point about Hobbes' saying do not do unto others, and over here he reverses it again, and says do unto others as would be done to ourselves. Now is there any significance to that?

Strauss: I suppose Hobbes knew that he chose now the broader, more comprehensive formula, but after he has made clear with utmost clarity the difference between the law which all men must obey and the law of the gospel--do you remember? It was not neces-



sary that he should hammer and repeat this point, because (inaudible).

Student: Up to this point he uses the negative formulation . . .

Strauss: I do not know. In order to judge you would have to have a complete correlation--how often he uses the one, and how often he uses the other, and then one could at least formulate an impression.

Now we come to a most important point, and that is in Leviathan, page 111, and De cive, Chapter V. And here he takes up the issue again which was taken up earlier in the first chapter--Is man a social animal? Now he goes here into some detail since there are other social animals. What is the difference between man and these others which have claimed that man is so anti-social by being social that he needs this leviathan as a power against his anti-sociality?

These are fixed items here. Now you see at once that the first three deal with man's pride in the wide sense, man's concern with superiority and his recognition by others. I believe that is obvious. Now in the fifth, where he says that irrational creatures cannot distinguish between injury and damage, and therefore the more, they be at ease, they are not offended with their fellows. Whereas men are most troublesome when they are most at ease, for then it is that he loves to show his freedom, and control the actions of them that govern the commonwealth. Pride--to show off. So this plays a very great role. The fourth speaks of man as the only animal which uses words. And the sixth, man is capable of covenants. Both things belong together--speech. So if we try to summarize it, the difference between man and the brutes is speech plus pride. By the way, there is a connection between these two things which is not made clear.

But speech and covenants clearly do not make man antagonistic to each other as such. So it must be pride. And as you see also from this remark that one cannot possibly say that this nasty thing is the preserve of a few, whereas most people are wholly free from this taint.

Now we have considered some other evidence regarding the importance of pride for Hobbes. For example, the title of the Leviathan, that pride is the root of all evil. The question is, what do we have to think about that. In the first place, this view is by no means limited to Hobbes. There is a successor to Hobbes who exercised perhaps a great concern than Hobbes, and held the same view. Concern with superiority and with recognition of one's superiority is the root of all evil. And that was Rousseau. Rousseau only called it (inaudible), but it is essentially the same thing. Now pride and honor--this shift into one another, and honor was called by Montesquieu the principle of monarchy as distinguished from (inaudible) and democracy. But what he had in mind was of course the feudal notion of monarchy.

Now what has happened since these writers of the 17th and 18th centuries is that honour is replaced by honesty, and the feudal notion of honour is replaced by honesty as a rational value. The importance which pride takes on in this kind of thing is also shown by the arrangement of the passions in Hume's Treatise on Human Nature where pride and its opposite are discussed before he discusses such things as love and hatred. Hume didn't make clear why he changed the order. So Hobbes' emphasis on pride is not a private thing, but (inaudible), nor can it be sufficiently explained by the fact that it is obviously what they call the secularized version--opposition between pride and fear of the Lord. You know only fear of the Lord is replaced by fear of violent death.

We also have to consider these other things. When we read earlier literature, such things as immortal glory play a very great role. In modern times this is used very rarely. If I remember well the men who speak most of this are Churchill and de Gaulle, men who are regarded as anachronistic. The key word became power, something which lacks the true splendor of honour and glory. In other words, what I am driving at is that this is a phenomenon of modern times.

So it is not a mere accident that Hobbes speaks of authority of pride. But the question is, why is he not entirely unambiguous about the subject of pride? Why are there such remarks as at the beginning of Chapter 17 in the Leviathan, "the natural passions of men," which clearly includes all passions. So in other words, the opposition between passion in general and reason determined Hobbes still very much. Secondly, however, another reason is this. Hobbes is concerned with the passion common to all animals, and therefore pride disappears because it is not something which you will find in all animals besides man. And this latter point is of course connected with Hobbes' hesitancy as to whether there is an essential difference between man and brutes to the extent to which he is concerned with denying an essential difference. He is concerned with deemphasizing the importance of pride as a thing peculiar to man.

Let us turn now to page 112, and there is only one little point in the second paragraph, when he speaks of why men establish a commonwealth. "that by their own industry and by the (inaudible) of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly." In the parallel paragraph of De cive, he says only the conservation of feed. This is the whole question. (Inaudible . . . ) mere self-preservation, or what Locke called later on, comfortable self-preservation. That makes all the difference. If that to which you have an absolute right is only (inaudible), or not to be wary of life, because as soon as your life and limbs are secure, most of you will be dissatisfied with everything. Think of a man who is a slave and his whole life is a life of drudgery, and he is perfectly reconciled with his situation because of the wholly secure situation . . . that's a great question.

In this same paragraph in De cive when he says everyone must admit their will; everyone to his will, and their judgment to his judgement. You see the distinction is complete, both to the will and to the judgement. In Leviathan he has spoken only of the will. That is a famous question of whether in Hobbes' doctrine there is a primacy of the will or there is a primacy of reason, and this is not simple to decide.

It is made clearer in De cive, for example, at the end of paragraph 9. Read the definition of the state.

Reader: "A city therefore . . . "

Strauss: It is interesting that he still uses in English 'city' when it is of course 'polity.' In the Leviathan he uses commonwealth which is much more English, but in the English translation of De cive he uses 'city.' In Latin he has 'civitas' which you would translate by commonwealth and not by city.

Reader: "A city therefore that when they define it is one person whose will by the compact of many men is to be received for the will of them all, so as he may use all the power and faculty of each particular person to the maintenance of peace and for common defense."

Strauss: It is not a transfer, strictly speaking, of power, but it is legally understood as a transfer. Now here we come to a point. Let us read the passage--the last paragraph of the fifth chapter in the Leviathan.

Reader: "The attaining to this sovereign power is by two ways. One, by natural force, as when a man maketh his children to submit themselves and their children to his government as being able to destroy them if they refuse, or by war, subduing his enemies to his will, giving them their lives on that condition. The other is when men agree amongst themselves to submit to some man or assembly of men voluntarily, on confidence to be protected by him against all others. This latter may be called a political commonwealth, a commonwealth by institution. And the former, a commonwealth by acquisition."

Strauss: The distinction as stated here by Hobbes is clear, isn't it? Now the characteristic of Hobbes' doctrine is then this. Regardless of whether you have been subjected by a conqueror, and because the alternative is destruction, or whether men assemble and submit to some man or some men on confidence rather than fear, the legal right of the ruler is the same in both cases. So since one of these natural subjections is of course the slave to his master, Hobbes says that in effect all subjects are slaves in comparison to their masters.

Now here of course is one of the major differences between Hobbes and Locke. First of all, there is no slavery strictly speaking possible in Locke's point of view, but the political power is not paternal power. Therefore, the political power is much more

limited than paternal power is. And in this point I think one cannot deny that Locke's doctrine is simply superior to Hobbes'. But Locke could do this because Locke found the solution (inaudible) without returning to the older doctrine. The older doctrine was the doctrine of the dual contract, contract of union and contract of subjection. And then you have the (inaudible) of power. Here are the people and there is the king. Locke did not return to that; there is a single contract, and the social contract is at the same time the contract of subjection. But you subject yourself not to the king, but to the community, the society. And this society may then delegate power, transference power, to an assembly for example, some executive power even to a king, but they have all delegated power. The fundamental power is to the community. And there is no contract between the king and the people. The king has been entrusted; the king has a trust, and the judgment of whether he will fulfill or not fulfill the trust rests clearly with the people or their assembly.

Student: Wouldn't the family be deposable if the king got enough power over the subjects?

Strauss: But the point is then, if he has the power of a father, no citizen or subject can have troubled him. If the father says, I put away this watch and give it to the other boy, the brother, (inaudible). But think what would happen if the king gave away part of the estate or piece of land, or even a dog, this would be regarded as wholly (inaudible). We do not speak now of paternal power in this country, but it was in former times, and then paternal power extended much further than political power.

Student: You were talking about the passage on page 11, paragraph two, and you ended up by giving two reasons why Hobbes tended to debunk or displace pride.

Strauss: That I didn't say, but why does he obscure the key position of pride? And I said one is simply the power of the traditional simple distinction between clear reason and passions; and the second, is that he wishes to understand by passions the passions common to every animal. And then pride loses its key position.

The strange point is that while this is very obvious that Hobbes was concerned with pride, it is most certainly not admitted, not seen. How come?

Student: I have a question here of terms. Hobbes called his commonwealth (inaudible), and political commonwealth, and I was confused by that entomologically. The latin equivalent of commonwealth is civitas; what is the Greek equivalent of political?

Strauss: Political is a Greek word.

Student: Polis or politeia?

Strauss: They are not derivative from polis. It is a long question. The Greek word 'politeia' can have in one sense the general meaning of any regime, and it has also more limited meanings where it can be stated roughly what we call republican in contradistinction to monarchy. But for Hobbes the point is not whether it is monarchic or republican. Except in one way--The natural is inevitably monarchic. The political may or may not be monarchic.

But the key point is whether power is acquired without explicit agreement like that of the father or the master, or whether the power survives (inaudible) agreement of government, then it is political.

Student: You mentioned something about honesty . . .

Strauss: This morality is honesty. In early statements Hobbes says honesty are but the same thing (honour and honesty) but for different parts of study. Honour for nobility and honesty for the commonwealth. But you must not forget that honesty in the provisional sense is of course the same as honour. (Inaudible.) Rousseau would not call it honesty; he would call it goodness. But you can say that Rousseau's goodness is a very complicated thing. In other words, when he speaks of the same thing proved indeed that he was not virtuous, and he even shouted it aloud, and the whole of Europe listened with astonishment. But he said he was good; i.e., it was never a desire to hurt others, but only strong passions which overcame him. That people were indirectly hurt very much, that is not a (inaudible) question.

Now in the first paragraph of Chapter 6 of De cive, we will note the parallel in the Leviathan. Hobbes makes it quite clear that there is no society except civil society. There is no society without government. The populus are nothing but an aggregate of individuals with no will or judgment of its own; in other words, they are what now would be called crowds. There is no society without government, and this is not only a mere condition, but an essential condition. Only by virtue of a government does a group of men become a society. Only in that case can it have one will and one judgment.

Of course this has become a target of criticism--this notion of society, essentially civil society, and therefore the consequence of the criticism is now the prevailing distinction between the state and society. This didn't imply the state was an organ of society, but is not the core of society. The state cannot be an organ of society if the society does not precede the state. That is implied.

The question is, what is that society which precedes the state? The simplest and crudest (inaudible) would be this. Individuals interact in a friendly or unfriendly or neutral manner. This interaction creates a kind of (inaudible). This (inaudible) is society. But without going any deeper now, surely we always

mean the individuals in question who constitute by their activity society. For example, we have American society and Canadian society; but where do we draw the line between American and Canadian society? By a strange coincidence, you go inside the political forum. In other words, it is very hard then to conceive of society as something acceding political society.

(Inaudible . . . ). Society is the successor to the concept of the people. And then the question is, of course, what is the people? Can there be a people without a government. Or is it merely an amorphous state, a primitive state?

Let me add one more point. Now Hobbes' doctrine seems to have the merit of courage but of course it is exposed to quite a few difficulties. According to Hobbes' doctrine, all associations other than political associations owe their being to the political association. There is no family except by virtue of law, lawyers who say this and this is a marriage, at least to the permission of the sovereign. No association is an association by its own right. And this right must be recognized by political society.

The alternative view is this. There are associations which exist by their own right, which is merely recognized by political society, but is not truly created by political society.

(The tape was changed at this point.)

For example, you take as the most common example today--interest, money in the landed interest, all kinds of subdivisions of interest, which grow up independently of any government society. Government may recognize that or may be indifferent, or may recognize it only by being indifferent to it, like property--originally there was no recognition of property, but it simply existed. So we have then a variety of associations which one cannot speak of as a difference of kind, but of function. And the political association has this function. (Inaudible) call it the monopoly of violence. If you want to buy violence, you have to go to the state. No one else can sell it to you.

But we have also to consider the alternative of this--the Aristotelian view. Aristotle never said that all associations derive their being from the political society. Each kind of association is covered by a specific function association, specific ends, as Aristotle says. And there is a certain order of these ends and political society has to comprehend these ends. And therefore this is the famous argument with which politics begins.

Hobbes surely stated the view in favor of political society much beyond what Aristotle did. All society is derivative from the political society, not that political society is the comprehensive or highest society.

Student: I'm sorry to go back a little bit, but what was the question you raised about what kind of society before political society. Is there something I missed as to why you raised that question?

Strauss: Civil and political society is the same for Hobbes.

Student: But you raised the question of what kind of society existed before civil society. You didn't raise that question?

Strauss: According to Hobbes--no. There were only isolated individuals, and temporarily coalescing. For Hobbes, all society is civil society, and all is derivative from it. There cannot be a society which is not the political society and which is by its own right.

Student: Does that position of Hobbes derive directly from a necessity of absolute submission of everyone to the sovereign?

Strauss: It is surely connected with that. Because if there were societies which had their own right, and by virtue of their own function, then the maximum political society can do is protect it. Think of marriage--a simple example. All associations are a government in making. The making may be due only to permission. We come to a chapter later on in the Leviathan about associations.

Student: What about the government of families--the Indians?

Strauss: That is not clear what he says. Either they are simply isolated individuals or else it is government all right--namely natural government. How does he call it? Sovereign power attained by natural force. You know he equates in fact what the situation was for the Indians in ancient Germany. As he saw it, lords ruling their children like slaves. It would be civil society, all right. Hobbes suggests on the one hand that it is not this kind of anarchy. And on the other hand, if you read his statements about ancient Germany and of Chapter 17, you would have to say that according to Hobbes it is civil society all right. That is a mere question of facts. The fundamental point is not in this way obscured. There is no society which is not decisively constituted by the existence of government; that remains a fact. And there can be only one government in every society. All other closed governments, say of a corporation, a trade union or what have you, is only a government by courtesy.

Student: But it would seem to me that if there is some kind of a natural government, even if it is only the government of the family, that adds some (inaudible) sociality of man.

Strauss: This is of course the great difficulty in Hobbes, anyway. But this has nothing directly to do with the prejudicial because in Hobbes' understanding either the family is the state or if it is not a state, then it is a creature of the government.

And the government must permit separate intercourse, propagation, obviously. But in which form? In the form of second marriage or mere concubinage or polygamy or what have you, incest or no incest. That is absolutely left to the government. Because otherwise the government would be subject to a higher authority.

Student: Is there any embarrassment (inaudible) that men would have to come together to copulate one with the other to establish the sovereign in the first place . . .

Strauss: But it is only a merging of society. As little as an embryo is a child . . . the people are not yet united. They become a society only by virtue of the submission which is identical with the establishment of the government. Prior to that they are still isolated individuals. They differ from the people who have not yet assembled merely because they are closer to being a society.

Student: But at a particular moment they are not powered by an authority.

Strauss: But therefore -- and they are not afraid. But that means only the transitional state.

Student: But if you wanted to research the criticism of Hobbes on this point, it does make civil society different from government. It leads to the typical example of Paris society today, in Morocco, in Tunisia, and all these different countries, and by that we mean religion, culture . . .

Strauss: But this revision is tolerably clear on this point. But then we should speak of Islamic society. But then of course the difficulty arises, is there no difference between Islamic countries which are of Arab stock and those like the Persians which are not of Arab stock? I am familiar with this difficulty. Today there is a wonderful formula for that. History of culture or civilization? But there are very great premises implied in that, and it is very convenient today to use these terms, and one would have to be very pedantic if one were to avoid them altogether, but we are supposed to be social scientists, and we are supposed to be in a reasonable way pedantic, and to believe that if we give a definition of civilization or culture, we will always stick to that, and then by virtue of this fact we proceed scientifically. This is not good enough, because mere consistency does not protect us against thoughtlessness. How come that since the 19th century the key term for the understanding of human society became culture or civilization. Do not forget society was easily available, but civilization and culture were originally terms which could be used only in the singular--the culture of the human mind. Civilization meant in the 18th century something like literacy, not to run around undressed or more or less undressed. Voltaire makes somewhere known that we will despise these people in America because they don't wear trousers.



But there were other things, and above all, a high development of the arts and sciences. This they understood by culture, and there was only one culture. Now in the 19th century people weren't able to speak of culture and civilization, implicitly denying that there is one and only one perfection of man. Now this (inaudible) most of our contemporary (inaudible), and therefore they have no incentive to reflect on the very premises implied in this concept. Nevertheless I believe it is necessary. You can see why it is necessary. When (inaudible) wrote his famous book which serves probably more for the popularization of culture than any other book, he meant by a culture a high culture, and how many do we have? Very few. And then when it was taken over by Ruth Benedict, and she refers to (inaudible) in the preface, so it is a demonstrable fact that (inaudible). And she used it in such a way that there are innumerable cultures. Indian tribe A has a different culture from Indian tribe B.

Now how to draw the line without thinking of political boundary. That is always a hard question. Toynbee suggested I believe sometime that the true line is drawn by the difference of artistic style, whether you can draw in this way a line between different cultures, especially in the sense in which the term is now used by American anthropologists, can very much be doubted.

Now you get this other interesting situation which we have, and that is subcultures. Now subculture is of course also a culture. And you have the culture of a juvenile delinquent, and any other being. Even the most savage and barbarous and abominable situation is a culture. Something has gone wrong there. The dangers were avoided in the old notion--there is only one perfection of man and the (inaudible) is culture.

Let us turn to page 113, the second paragraph.

Reader: "A common-wealth is said to be instituted, when a Multitude of men do Agree, and Covenant, every one, with every one, that to whatsoever Man, or Assembly of Men, shall be given by the major part, the Right to Present the Person of them all, (that is to say, to be their Representative;) every one, as well he that Voted for it, as he that Voted against it, shall Authorize all the Actions and Judgements, of that Man, or Assembly of men, in the same manner, as if they were his own, to the end, to live peaceably amongst themselves, and be protected against other men."

Strauss: Now I think that is perfectly clear. The contract is to every individual. Every individual is obliged to every individual, and they oblige to submit themselves to the sovereign. The sovereign does not enter the commonwealth. The sovereign is, as it were, the beneficiary of the contract, without any obligation, without any legal obligation. This we have discussed before.

But the point which we have to consider now is that the decision is made by the major part. Now where does this come from?

Why should the major part have the right of way? Hobbes discusses this difficulty in the twentieth paragraph of Chapter 6 of De cive. It's a long paragraph--near the middle.

Reader: "For it is not from nature that the consent of the major part should be received for the consent of all."

Strauss: That is all we need. So in other words it is not a principle of natural right. Why should we then leave it as the will of the majority. Why should it have the right of way? I do not recall any discussion of that in Hobbes, which does not mean it isn't there, but I do remember Locke's discussion in the second Treatise on Civil Government, paragraph 96. "For when any number of men have by the consent of every individual made a community, they have thereby made that community one body with the power to act as one body which is only by the will and determination of the majority, for that which act any community being only the consent of the individuals of it, and it being necessary to that which is one body to one way, it is necessary that the body should move that way whither the greater force carries them." That is the consent of the majority. "For else it is impossible should act or continue one body, one community, which the consent of every individual (inaudible) and neither does it agree that it should." And so everyone is bound by that consent to be concluded by the majority. If you submit to the community, you submit ipso facto to the majority decision of that community. And therefore we see that in assemblies empowered to act by positive law, where no number is set by that positive law which empowers them, the act of the majority passes for the act of the whole, and of course this term, as having by the law of nature and reason the power of the whole.

Locke differs from Hobbes by saying that the principle of majority is from nature which Hobbes denies.

Student: Isn't Chapter 6, Article 2 to be considered? Of the De cive. There is a statement on the majority. It is again a legal fiction that it be received for the will of all which the major part shall approve of. "For otherwise there will be no will at all of a multitude of men, whose wills and votes differ so variously."

Strauss: That is true, but didn't Hobbes say this was not by nature. What is the difference between Locke's reasoning in paragraph 96 and this remark of Hobbes.

Student: It seems to me that Locke gives this blanket power to the majority but it is conditioned by the contract. The contract is specified, and therefore the majority can act only . . .

Strauss: But why should the contract necessarily contain that stipulation? The majority . . . necessarily . . . than it must be a principle of law and reason, as Locke says. And Hobbes denies it. Locke has a point which is absent from Hobbes, which if I remember well, was made before Locke by Spinoza.

And that is the greater force. The majority is stronger than the minority by nature. Namely, if you disregard the (inaudible), ten knights in armor may be stronger than a thousand unarmed (inaudible). Sure we know that. But that is already a complicated arrangement; that is not by nature.

Student: I think it is implicit in the last part of Article 2 where he goes on to say that if anybody tries to stay out, if the minority tries to stay out, that puts them in a state of war and the city retains its primitive right against the dissenters, that is, the right of war against an enemy. Implicitly, the majority will carry the day.

Strauss: Say the majority want monarchy and the minority want the republic, which will point the way? Both agree there must be society. The state of nature is unbearable. Why should the will of the majority have the right of way? Locke does give a reason; whether it is good or not is another matter. Namely, power. Now I thought about it more than once and I came up with the suggestion that hitherto has never been refuted, but it may nevertheless be (inaudible). That there is really no alternative to that under the conditions. Now what are the conditions? All are equal. Now if all are equal, what other fair principle can there be? Fair or unfair. Turn it around, and say that the will of the minority has the right of way.

Do you see the point? There are two alternatives. Either they are unequal, and then the whole issue does not arise. Then the superior people will have the right of way. The second point--you can also decide it by lot, tossing coins, but that isn't excluded here. We assume deliberation. And tossing a coin means you abandon deliberation, either from the very beginning or because deliberation leads nowhere and you have seen that. If deliberation is to be an effective part of the decision, and all members are equal, there is no possibility except--no physical possibility, because the alternative is self-defeating. You would simply vote against your wish and you would reach the same result by remaining in the minority.

Student: A person who is conquered would have to submit himself to the sovereign just as much as if he had made a contract thereto. Would it not follow then if a majority of individuals contracted among themselves and established a sovereign who at least was the beneficiary of their contract, that this power given to the sovereign would then be turned in conquest over the minority, and if the minority were not conquered, in effect the contract would never be established.

Strauss: But it would still then mean that the superior force determines it. Let us take the situation seriously--there is a difference of opinion between a republic and a monarchy. And there is a speaker in favor of the one and a speaker for the other. And then it comes the decision, and you don't get unanimity. You get perhaps say 100 against 75. Why should the 100 have the

right of way? Hobbes says it is simply a convention. Locke says no, it is not a mere convention.

Student: You said that if the majority doesn't rule, and the minority would rule, that every man would vote against his own wish, but that doesn't get rid of the problem, because if every man consistently--if all men voted against their own wishes, you would still have the old majority being the new majority.

Strauss: The only alternative is the will of the majority or the will of the minority. Now if the 100 monarchists would vote for the republic, and the republicans vote for monarchy, and then you have 75 in the favor of the republic, and the minority has the right of way. I think it is simply not feasible to do that, unless--I mean either there is inequality and then the whole problem does not arise, or if we call it and there is no other way to go by it, excluding of course, to repeat, the first, tossing the coin, as incompatible with deliberation. You toss a coin either because you do not accept deliberation in the first place and then Hobbes should have said so, or you have the course to drop the coin after deliberation has led nowhere.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Rousseau also denies that the majority principle is natural, and therefore the only way which society can be established is by unanimity. There can be a unanimous decision that we will abide by the will of the majority.

I mention here only one point--the sovereign is not bound by the civil law, and that means of course that there are no property rights against the sovereign. Let us see paragraph 15 of Chapter 6 of De cive.

Reader: "But although there be many things which the city permits to its citizens, and therefore they may sometimes go to law against their chief; yet is not that action belonging to civil right, but to natural equity; neither is it concerning what by right he may do who hath the supreme power, but what he hath been willing should be done, and therefore he shall be judge himself, as though (the equity of the cause being well understood) he could not give wrong judgment."

Strauss: You see how complicated things become in practice. This is one point. And the second note to this paragraph is also quite interesting.

Reader: "As often as a citizen is granted to have an action of law against the supreme, that is, against the city, the question is not in that action, whether the city may, by right, keep possession of the thing in controversy, but whether by the laws formerly made she would keep it; for the law is the declared will of the supreme."

Strauss: Of the sovereign we could translate it. We will take this up when we come to the chapter dealing with civil law.

Reader: "Since then the city may raise money from the citizens under two titles, either as tribute, or as debt, in the former case there is no action of law allowed, for there can be no question whether the city have the right to require tribute."

Strauss: In other words, without representation.

Reader: "In the latter it is allowed, because the city will take nothing from its citizens by fraud or cunning, and yet if need require, all they have, openly. And therefore he that condemns this place, saying, that by this doctrine it is easy for princes to free themselves from their debts, he does it impertinently."

Strauss: Is it really an impertinent criticism to say that if the rights of sovereigns are defined as they are, then it follows that he can take away property from the subjects and do it in a very unequal way? There can only be a hope for Hobbes that the sovereign will be a fair and decent man. There is no institution to guarantee it, and what the successors of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, tried to do was to find an institution which would guarantee that it was not a mere hope that the sovereign would be decent, but that he was compelled to act tolerably decent. This is what they were trying to do in different ways, but the ultimate difficulty remains. There is no guarantee for decency to be gotten by laws. This is fundamentally Machiavelli's nice point which has something to recommend it, when he said that the prince can be absolutely assured of the decency and loyalty of his ministers if he makes him good and keeps him good. Meaning if it is more profitable to the minister to be loyal than to be disloyal. But this is of course never sufficient because for every gift of this prince there may be a foreign prince with a bigger gift, and so on.

Now at the beginning of paragraph 16.

Reader: "Theft, murder, adultery, and all injuries are forbid by the laws of nature; but what is to be called theft, what murder, what adultery, what injury in a citizen, this is not to be determined by the natural, but by the civil law."

Strauss: In other words, natural law does not define murder, adultery, and these other things. Natural law only says you should not harm any other man. Which harm is bad or punishable--that's another question.

The most interesting case is that of marriage, because the meaning of murder and so forth is reasonably clear, but where to draw the line here? For example, why should incest make a marriage invalid? Not determined by natural right, as Hobbes said. Now natural law

has according to Hobbes this character--that there are only certain universally valid general rules, and he enumerated them in Chapter 3. There are no conclusions from that. Thomas Aquinas distinguishes between two forms in which this universal principles are specified: either by conclusion or by what he calls determination. For example, according to Thomas, prohibition against killing is a conclusion from the prohibition against hurting other men. But the specific punishment for killing is the determination, not the consequence, because there are a great variety in which people might be punished. One can say Hobbes denies that there are any conclusions. Everything is determination. And the determination of course lies with the sovereign. Needless to say, marriage is strictly civil. Whether the state permits religious marriage (inaudible), but to be valid in the eyes of the sovereign, it is civil marriage.

Now at the beginning of paragraph 17, there is also something we might mention.

Reader: "This same supreme command and absolute power, seems so harsh to the greatest part of men, as they hate the very naming of them; which happens chiefly through want of knowledge, what human nature and the civil laws are, and partly also through their default, who, when they are invested with so great authority, abuse . . . ."

Strauss: This can't be the passage I have in mind. I'm sorry. But the point is from other passages that there is still the possibility that the sovereign transgresses natural right. And we have discussed this before--Hobbes solves this difficulty sufficiently for his purposes by saying that in case of conflict, the duty to obey the sovereign precedes all other duties.

Or this other point which you mentioned--when someone is commanded by the sovereign to kill his own father, what is Hobbes' position in that case?

Student: Hobbes says that since man already renounces his right on the basis of preserving his life, he can't be obliged to do anything which is for him worse than death itself. But he says that this doesn't deny the sovereign's right anyway because the sovereign can ask someone else to do it.

Strauss: Sure. But still, there is a certain obligation for the son. He must not prevent the sovereign or the sovereign's cop or executioner from killing his father. So the passive obligation is absolute. The active obligation is qualified.

I wish we had more time today to discuss MacPherson's discussion of Hobbes on obligation, but I will postpone it for next time.

Lecture X

Seminar on Hobbes: February 5, 1964

(The tape for the first half of this lecture was garbled, and thus was not able to be transcribed.)

Strauss: . . . because he admitted also the theological part at the end of De cive. But if you look here at this passage, and you see here first the right of monarchy prescription, i.e., no right of republican prescription. This is the definitely state of man. And I have not looked at it for ages, but one makes some striking observations. The most striking thing is, I believe, is the absence of (inaudible), or if I may state it in the form of a general rule, one must also see what (inaudible) wants to know. If it is something which would be there as a matter of course--the most famous Biblical passage is absent. That is absent, just as Locke never quotes it. Locke has different reasons for not including it. His biblical passage regarding obedience to authority is let the Lord be the judge. In the Bible this refers to war, and in Hobbes this transfers to civil war. Let the Lord be judge between the king and the people, and not let the Lord be the judge between Israel and (inaudible), or whoever at the time.

I believe Hobbes' reason is this. The consideration or the reason given for being subject to the higher powers--do you remember? All power is from God. Then, what he says himself on page 135.

Reader: "Our saviour himself acknowledges that men ought to pay such taxes as are by kings and foes, where he says give to Caesar that which is Caesar's, and pay such taxes and that the king's word is sufficient to take anything from any subject. And that the king the judge of that be for he himself as King of the Jews demanded his disciples to take the ass and ask his foes to carry him into Jerusalem."

Strauss: Do you see the difficulty from Hobbes' point of view? The King of the Jews . . . but this is both King of the Jews and subject to the king, meaning in this case of course Rome. And according to Hobbes that is impossible that there can be a duality. That, I think, is what he has in mind here. This only as a minor curiosity.

Page 172, paragraph 4. We have already discussed this. The great difficulty about the right of succession for the monarchy. But it is more interesting for Hobbes' purpose to look at De cive, Chapter 9, paragraph 17.

Reader: "Now because the sons are equal, and the power cannot be divided, the eldest shall succeed. For if there be any difference by reason of age, the eldest is supposed more worthy; for nature being . . . "

Strauss: In the original, the oldest kid is more worthy, period.

Reader: "... judge, the most in years (because usually it is so) is the wisest. But other judge there cannot be had."

Strauss: Why? Because he is discussing this here only from the point of view of natural law.

Reader: "But if the brothers must be equally valued, the succession shall be by lot. But primogeniture is a natural lot . . . "

Strauss: And so on--the emphasis here on nature is quite striking. Hobbes admits that the primary consideration of any succession is that the present government has the right to determine succession. Failing such determination, and custom also failing, we have to return to natural equity. This is dropped in the Latin Leviathan as far as I could see.

He has emphasized that there is no difference between the natural and the instituted commonwealth regarding right, and that means there is no difference between the duty of a slave and the duties of a citizen, even a citizen in a democracy. Now this is a rather horrid teaching but it also has a sort of humane implication which is on page 133 in the third paragraph.

Reader: "In summe, the Rights and Consequences of both Paternall and Despotick Dominion, are the very same with those of a Sovereign by Institution; and for the same reasons; which reasons are set down in the precedent chapter. So that for a man that is Monarch of divers Nations, whereof he hath, in one the Sovereignty by Institution of the people assembled, and in another by Conquest, that is by the Submission of each particular, to avoyd death or bonds; to demand of one Nation more than of the other, from the title of Conquest, as being a Conquered Nation, is an act of ignorance of the Rights of Sovereignty."

Strauss: In other words, from his point of view the rights of the conquered nation are improved. This is not entirely relevant. On the opposite page when he speaks about the difference between slaves who have no obligation and the slave who is under an obligation. Just read that first paragraph.

Reader: "And that which men do, when they demand (as it is now called) Quarter, (which the Greeks called ἑλκεῖν, taking alive), is to evade the present fury of the Victor, by Submission, and to compound for their life, with Ransome, or Service: and therefore he that hath Quarter, hath not his life given, but deferred till farther deliberation; For it is not an yeelding on condition of life, but to discretion. And then onely is his life in security, and his service due, when the Victor hath trusted him with his corporall liberty. For Slaves that work in Prisons, or Fetters, do it not of duty, but to avoyd the cruelty of their task-masters."



Strauss: In other words, the security of life is not sufficient. Liberty, of a kind, belongs to it; that's very important.

Student: In the case of commonwealth by acquisition, is it true that the contract is between the conquered and the conqueror.

Strauss: That cannot be. There cannot be a contract (inaudible). I see your difficulty; the difficulty is that there cannot be on the other hand this contract among the many for the benefit of a person; that cannot be, because we assume that each one (inaudible). That is true; that is a difficulty which I had not known before.

But at any rate, what Hobbes thinks of primarily and what he is really interested in is of course the (inaudible) contract, and I think it is primarily due to the pleasure of the tradition.

This point we must also mention--another great change regarding the rule of parents. In the traditional view it was really the rule of the parents, but with an emphasis on the father. This plays a great role in the controversy between Locke and (inaudible). Locke (inaudible) the mother also. Now Hobbes doesn't forget the mother. On the contrary, the mother is the one who rules the child and has natural right to do that, and not the father. Why? (Inaudible . . . ). This was a great change. The traditional view of the superiority of the male sex has lost its importance. Hobbes denies that. As Grotius stated, the father is of course the ruler because of the eminence of the sex. He admits that this, generally speaking, may be true, but there are so many exceptions, which speak against this male superiority.

I note also another point, in De cive, Chapter 9, paragraph 8. Honouring parents by (inaudible) is a precept of natural law. Honouring--not obeying. This is a subject discussed at great length by Locke. In the Leviathan that does no longer occur.

Let us consider one more passage--Chapter 8 of De cive, paragraph 10.

Reader: "We get a right over irrational creatures in the same manner that we do over the persons of men, to wit, by force and natural strength. For if in the state of nature it is lawful for every one, by reason of that war which is of all against all, to subdue and also to kill men as oft as it shall seem to conduce unto their good, much more will the same be lawful against brutes; namely, at their own discretion, to reduce those to servitude which by art may be tamed and fitted for use, and to persecute and destroy the rest by a perpetual war, as dangerous and noxious. Our dominion therefore over beasts, hath its original from the right of nature, not from divine positive right."

Strauss: (Inaudible . . . ). This older view occurred also in Hobbes. We have not made this usage quite consistent as a strict doctrine. Why does he emphasize that--"dominion over beasts hath its original from the right of nature, not from divine positive right."

Those of you who know the Third Treatise of Locke would know. Now what is the divine positive right? In Locke's language a charter given by God to Noah. The implication of course is this. If man has by natural right the right to eat animals, then the original charter was a diminution of natural right. This I think is the implication of this doctrine both in Hobbes and Locke.

Now I would like to say a few words about this chapter in MacPherson. Now what is the issue? Hobbes deduced obligation solely from self-interest, and therefore that is an opinion maintained in part (inaudible), there is no moral obligation proper. Only a prudential. But MacPherson raises the question, is moral obligation superior to prudential obligation--page 73. Toward the end of the page.

Reader: "To say that Hobbes had a good reason to call his kind of obligation moral as other philosophers have had or have, to deny it that title is not to claim that Hobbes' obligation is more effective than or even as effective as some others. It is simply to say that a burden of proof must be put as much on the others as on Hobbes. What Hobbes did, in effect, was to shift the burden of proof to the moral, knowing that the burden was an impossible one for them to sustain. In the absence of such proof, Hobbes' obligation might still be called moral."

Strauss: MacPherson says it is an arbitrary act of the moral (inaudible) to deny the epithet of moral to the obligation as Hobbes understands it and which is indeed admittedly a merely prudential obligation.

Another point which he makes against the moralists, at least in their present-day form, is made on page 74 in the first paragraph. Here he says that Hobbes deduced the ought from the is legitimately. The link is the equality of man. It is by means of this fortune, of equality of man, that Hobbes deduces right and obligation from fact. I think the latter point is well taken because this is surely for Hobbes not a postulate. It is for Hobbes a fact that all men are by nature equal. And therefore, if men are treated differently, then they are treated unjustly. I think that is absolutely correct.

The more serious question is this--which claim of the moralists does Hobbes not satisfy? Page 76.

Reader: "It may still be objected that Hobbes has not deduced from fact, but has introduced besides a postulate of fact a postulate of right, namely an equal right to life. An equal right to life is certainly being asserted, but the point is that Hobbes treats this as contained in the postulate of fact. He is able to treat it so because of his original postulate (inaudible). Since men are self-moving systems of matter which equally seek to maintain their own motion and are equally fragile, there is no reason why they should not have equal right."

Strauss: I think that is again another good point, and why do

brutes not have such right? This would be a difficulty because the brutes are also self-moving systems of matter. That they are not equally fragile, or either much more fragile, think of a fly or a mouse, but at any rate that does not exist between brutes and man. This equality of (inaudible), which according to Hobbes' premise, subsists among all men. Surely the inequality of power among men would be a considerable thing, but this is ruled out by Hobbes' starting point, namely men are by nature (inaudible), men can kill everybody else.

Now the difficulty was that this came up in class quite frequently, this right to life and the whole right of self-preservation, and the fact that this is in no way sufficient for most men. But let us speak to the core of the argumentation--page 77.

Reader: "Purpose or will brought in from outside the observed universe was hypothesized as an outside force, constantly imposing itself by way of reason or revelation."

Strauss: Next paragraph.

Reader: "Hobbes reversed the assumption. Instead of finding right and obligation only in some outside force, he assumes that they were entailed in the means of each human mechanism to maintain its motion. And since each human mechanism to do so must assess its own requirements, there could be no question of imposing a system of values from outside or from above."

Strauss: So we learn now what he understands by moralists. The moralists are those who understand purpose as brought in from outside. How Aristotle brought in (inaudible) purpose from outside of the universe is a purely factual question, but like most writers on Hobbes, he doesn't know anything about Aristotle. But this is trivia.

I still would like to find out what the true issue is, and I think we turn to page 83 in the third paragraph.

Reader: "Now a system of obligation that is or can become morally binding on all individuals in a society must be one which all of them are capable of accepting as binding. One of the facts which must be present either observable or establishable by analysis before such obligation can be deduced from the fact is that individuals are capable of acknowledging such obligation. This condition can be met if the society is one in which individuals are capable of being themselves as equal, in some respects more important than in all the respects in which they are unequal."

Strauss: What does he here presuppose? This is of course not Hobbes' argument, but it is MacPherson's argument. Now what assumption does he make here? Men must be equal in the decisive respects, if there is to be a system of obligations morally binding on all individuals in society. Is this necessarily the case?

I would say no. There is no intrinsic impossibility that all men regarding society could see the superiority of some. Why should there not be?

Student: I think in this paragraph this only applies to the conditions of equality of right. You could translate the first (inaudible) by saying all men would have to be in their position to see that some men, maybe blue-eyed men, are better than others.

Strauss: That he does not say. You were wrong. This condition can be met if the society is one in which individuals are capable of seeing themselves as equal in some respects more important than all other respects in which they are unequal. The case which I have in mind is one in which all things are unequal in some respects more important than all the other respects in which they are equal. Cannot all be with equal certainty? Let us say some men are superior, i.e., that they are not all of them equal.

Now there are some more passages and perhaps it will become clearer. On page 85.

Reader: "Does Hobbes fail to allow in his model for the inequality of insecurity which the other attributes of his model necessarily imply? If Hobbes should rely solely on the supposed equality of insecurity in his model, we should have to say that he had failed to make the case for all men in society as not having a common political obligation. However, there is in his model of society another feature which may be considered. The equal subordination of every individual to the laws of the (inaudible). In Hobbes' model which in this respect coincides with the model of possessive market society, everyone is subject to the determination of the competitive market for power. Hobbes saw accurately that in the possessive market society all values of this (inaudible) are in fact established by the operation of the market, and all morality tends to be the morality of the market. The possessive market society does establish right by fact. Every man's entanglements are determined by the actual competitive relationship between the powers of individuals. If the determination of values and rights for the market is accepted as justice by all members of the society, there is a sufficient basis for rational obligation binding in all manner to an authority which could maintain and enforce the market system. Hobbes thought that this condition was met. He thought that the market concept of justice was the only one that could be entertained by a rational individual who realizes his position as a mere human in a market society. In this, he was at least partly mistaken. It is also possible for rational men to resist or reject the whole market system."

Strauss: In other words, as far as it goes, Hobbes' doctrine is perfectly consistent. He only did not see the inconveniency of the possessive market society which became much (inaudible) in the 19th century.

The question is this. The key point which he makes is that the considerations which are relevant are prudential considerations. Moral consideration is different from prudential and has no place. In one sense of course this is exactly what Aristotle said altogether--that prudence, honesty, is (inaudible) with the moralists. But prudence means something very different here as it means in Aristotle. Can you define the difference of prudence in the Aristotelian sense and prudence by MacPherson and today generally.

Student: Prudence, I think, how Aristotle meant it is with a view towards some minor good, a view of the practical.

Strauss: Also the individual.

Student: . . . has to understand the theoretical to appreciate its proper place. Whereas for Hobbes prudence is your experiences.

Strauss: All right, we are not bound now to Hobbes particular definition of prudence.

Student: Could it be understood that for Aristotle prudence is a quality, whereas for Hobbes prudence is a quantity.

Strauss: One could say that, but I believe that isn't actually the consequence. Prudence is the ability to find the proper means, the right means, the efficient means, for the end. And I believe if this is maintained, there is no difference between Aristotle and Hobbes. But the difference is most obvious as regards the end. What is the end in the case of Hobbes? Let us say comfortable self-preservation. And what is ordinarily understood today by prudence (inaudible) -- every deliberation conducive to comfortable self-preservation. This includes of course also simple self-preservation. Fear is Fear is the difference between the utilitarians and the men he calls the moralists. The moralists say comfortable self-preservation is only one and not the highest (inaudible) of man. That is the point, and this issue has completely disregarded that. So for Aristotle, the obligation, the political obligation, in the full sense is derivative from the fullness the common good and not from the very narrowly conceived self-preservation. That is the point which of course he does not even see. I'm sure Mr MacPherson--some of you know him--is very much concerned with the higher end, but his doctrine does not phrase out properly.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Oh, I thought you were a student, and I think one should always respect the teacher-student relation.

Student: Were you saying that one of the difficulties with Hobbes--he says that you have to make a covenant with one who conquers you.

Strauss: It must be a contract. Because there must always be formal kinds of surrender and transfer rights. If one would go towards the chapter devoted to contracts, which you know is very long, provision might have been made for this case. I do not remember now.

Student: But it would definitely have to be a contract.

Strauss: Sure, there is no question, because no one's mere force, mere superiority as such, does not give right. This is, generally speaking, the principle of all these doctrines. That which gives right is neither force nor fraud as such; it must be agreement, and a reasonable agreement, because otherwise a fraudulent agreement would not be true again. There must be some substantial benefit accruing to the subject from subjection; otherwise it would be fraudulent. So to what extent does the precise contract of development in chapter 14?

Student: Which one? Chapter 2 of De cive and Article 9 for necessity for (inaudible) is cited in Chapter 8, articles 3 and 4, . . .

Strauss: Yes, and what does it say? You have not read it?

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Because it is not a Latin word. The Latin word is *summum imperum*. But what does he say in the English De cive? Does he speak of sovereignty?

Student: Dominion.

Strauss: This would be fundamentally only the language. Sovereignty is a friend from the English word.

Student: In the Leviathan, he sometimes speaks of dominion or sovereignty, and in De cive I noticed at one point he said dominion or propriety.

Strauss: Property. That's the old view. *Domina* is the owner. *Dominus* is for example the master of the slave, the owner of the slave.

Student: But I mean if the two terms are equivalent, property could be understood as sovereignty.

Strauss: No, it would lead to definite confusion. Still, there is a long prehistory of these terms and one would have to go into Grotius, for example, to learn about this, but it becomes quite clear if one reserves the sovereignty or *summum imperum* to that which necessarily belongs to the ruler, and all other rights of control, call them by a different name like ownership, property, or some other form which clearly indicates that. It is interesting that Locke in the Second Treatise doesn't speak of

sovereignty at all but he does speak of supreme power, which is the same, if you consider the difference between Latin and English.

Lecture XI  
Seminar on Hobbes: February 9, 1964

(The tape for the first half of this lecture was garbled, and thus was not able to be transcribed.)

Strauss: Now let us see how far we can go in the sequel. At the beginning of the next chapter, we see it is sometimes drawn on the plan of the second half of the Leviathan. This is confirmed by the beginning of Chapter 23 too.

We see a certain criticism of monopolies here on page 151. It is sufficient to read only the end.

Reader: "Of this double Monopoly one part is disadvantageous to the people at home, the other to forraigners. For at home by their sole exportation they set what price they please on the husbandry, and handy-works of the people; and by the sole importation, what price they please on all forraign commodities the people have need of; both which are ill for the people. On the contrary, by the sole selling of the native commodities abroad, and sole buying the forraign commodities upon the place, they raise the price of those, and abate the price of these, to the disadvantage of the forraigner."

Strauss: Which is good. Yes?

Reader: "For where but one selleth, the Merchandise is the dearer; and where but one buyeth the cheaper: Such Corporations therefore are no other than Monopolies; though they would be very profitable for a Common-wealth, if being bound up into one body in forraigne Markets they were at liberty at home, every man to buy, and sell at what price he could."

Strauss: There is no moral consideration; that's clear.

On page 153, the second paragraph--a body politique (inaudible) may be given to the sovereign. This is a discussion of the basis of the British Parliament as it should be, meaning merely convoked for council. More interesting is the last paragraph on page 153.

Reader: "Private Bodies Regular, and Lawfull, are those that are constituted without Letters, or other written Authority, saving the Lawes common to all other Subjects. And because they be united in one Person Representative, they are held for regular; such as are all Families, in which the Father, or Master ordereth the whole Family. For he obligeth his Children, and Servants, as farre as the Law permitteth, though not further, because none of them are bound to obedience in those actions, which the Law hath forbidden to be done. In all other actions, during the time they are under domestique government, they are subject to their Fathers, and Masters, as to their immediate Sovereigns."



Reader: "For the Father, and Master being before the Institution of Common-wealth, absolute Sovereigns in their own Families, they lose afterward no more of their Authority, than the Law of the Common-wealth taketh from them."

Strauss: Is this not interesting? What is the status of the family? It is a regular, private body. But what distinguishes the family from all other bodies? The key point is that they exist by their own right. All the corporations and all the administrative units, provinces and counties, and such things, they are simply government-made, are simple creations of the government. But the family is not.

Student: What would be another example of this?

Strauss: According to Hobbes they are unique. They are not in a sense government-created or even tolerated because they are in an institutio n of their own right.

A few points in the next paragraph--public ministers of sovereign powers. It is made clear that the public ministers are simply delegates of the sovereign and have no right of their own.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: But still, the family as family, i.e., the society consisting of those who have generated the children. What society must do is to regulate polygamy, monogamy, and this maternal power, including the power of life and death or not including--that depends on the sovereign. There is no law everyone may marry.

Student: Does that seem to set apart some kind of family for the general communism?

Strauss: Communism would mean constant fighting for Hobbes. Without the distinction of mine and thine in both respects, (inaudible).

Now in the next chapter he speaks at the bottom of page 156 about the distinction between public and natural person of the sovereign or the monarchy, and he states it very nicely--who are the public servants and private servants. The last line of page 156.

Reader: "And therefore neither Ushers, nor Sergeants, nor other Officers that waite on the Assembly, for no other purpose, but for the commodity of the men assembled, in an Aristocracy, or Democracy; nor Stewards, Chamberlains, Cofferers, or any other Officers of the household of a Monarch, are Publique Ministers in a Monarchy."

Strauss: That is clear. The difficulty of public and private ministers. To say that a man who is key barber of the king is

of course not a public minister. More serious of course is the distinction of the king between his public and private person, and we have discussed this before--how to distinguish a command of the king or something which is shouted in a state of drunkenness.

Student: I have a question about the previous chapter, when you said on page 155 (inaudible...).

Strauss: No, they are unjust as being contrary to the peace and safety of the people. In other words, if there were a (inaudible) limiting themselves to the humble petition to the sovereign, that would not necessarily be unlawful because they admit--unless the king forbids it, unless the sovereign forbids it. (Inaudible) . . . political is a dangerous word because it contains sovereignty somehow. The fact that we have become accustomed to (inaudible) as a matter of course is relevant to the fact that we now call banking what was formerly called usury. That is a long long story, and I could quote other parallels to that development. It's groupings of people of these different interests making humble petitions to the government for their interests, say merchandising, that's of course all right unless the king forbids it.

Page 159 at the beginning of the paragraph. "These properties of just and rationally Judicature considered . . ." You can say what Hobbes teaches here in this connection is the natural law regulating judicature. Just and rational judicature as distinguished from the practical.

The next chapter--only one point, which by the way has been correctly seen by MacPherson. The statement about the status of labor--labor is a commodity like any other--has a very limited meaning. Can you read the second part of page 161, paragraph two?

Reader: "For a man's labour also is a commodity exchangeable for benefits as well as any other thing, and there have been common-wealths that having no more territory than have served them for habitation have nevertheless not only made (inaudible) but also increased their power, partly by the labor of trading from one place to another, and partly by selling the manufacturer whereof the materials were brought in from other places."

Strauss: You see here labour of trading is the key example of labour. He doesn't mean here labor as in labouring classes. He means any form of labour, just as Locke mean it in his chapter on property. It means not only by the sweat of your brow, although it could include it, but it means also barter. In other words, Hobbes is not thinking of the proletariat here.

Student: At the bottom of page 152 Hobbes says "it is true that a sovereign . . . contrary to their own conscience (inaudible)."

Strauss: You're right. This is a concession of Hobbes to usage, but what he surely means is the breach of the law of nature. We come to that later. The main point is the assertion of the right of public domain. On page 151, paragraph 3, he says in the middle "Even Cicero, a passionate defender of liberty, in the public interest attributes all propriety (inaudible)."

Now he speaks in the same paragraph about the right distribution of commodities. The right distribution cannot mean of course any reasonable allocation, as it would mean according to the meaning of (inaudible) to which Hobbes here refers. For Hobbes the question is not the right institution, the proper allocation, but the solution by whom? Of course the answer is by the sovereign.

Reader: "But the nature of man being as it is, the setting forth of public land or of any certain revenue for the commonwealth is in vain, and tendeth to the disillusion of government and to the condition of mere nature. Or, as soon as ever the sovereign power falleth into the hands of a monarch or of an assembly, they are either too negligent of money or too hazardous of engaging the public trust into a long and hazardous war. Commonwealths can endure nor dieth, for being that their expense is not limited by their own appetite, but by external accidents and the appetites of their neighbors, the public riches cannot be limited by other limits than those of the emergent occasion requireth."

Strauss: We are familiar with this thought, but it was not so generally expected in former ages. It is of course a simple implication of the doctrine of sovereignty.

Student: I want to go back . . . (inaudible)--while there is a certain (inaudible) right of revolution, it would seem to indicate the sovereign was no longer sovereign, that he was not able to fulfill his function . . .

Strauss: Surely it would mean that, but the mandate of heaven is not here.

Student: I was thinking in the sense of what Nietzsche said that if a group of people overthrew the emperor, it would indicate that he alone should have the mandate.

Strauss: No, no. That would mean that these men took some grievances regarding taxes or other things as much more important than mere protection.

Student: Doesn't he say as long as that power lasts, wouldn't it indicate that perhaps the group was successful in overthrowing the power of the sovereign?

Strauss: I don't know now where he has this passage about Littleton--you know, the English lawyer--and Littleton has this very immoral discussion where the heir apparent kills the king, and then according to Littleton he becomes the king by this very act and can no longer (inaudible), and Hobbes protests violently against this lawyers' notoriety. For example, he dies without heirs or the country is overrun by conquerors--oh no, and the nature of which he speaks here is not the heaven, but is effective in each individual with his concern for self-preservation.

Now a few words about MacPherson--the key point of course is this, that Hobbes doctrine is quite respectable as the doctrine of the nature of modern society, of Hobbes' own society, but that Hobbes of course claimed that it was the theory of the society.

There is one point on page 92 in the middle--"Noone after Hobbes, however much they agreed with Hobbes' estimate of man as self-interested, calculating machines." Now formerly he had not spoken of this 'calculating' as a specifically human thing. He had spoken of self-moving and self-directing.

Reader: Page 93. "The source of the error where there is a one significant shortcoming of Hobbes' model already noticed. His model failed to correspond to the possessive market model in that it did not allow for the existence of politically significant unequal classes."

Strauss: The last sentence on the page . . .

Reader: "What Hobbes missed then was the possibility of class cohesion offsetting the fragmenting forces in market society."

Strauss: In other words, Hobbes was wrong by speaking of atomistic individuals. This was a rather realistic picture of possessive market society, because there are two classes, the class of the property owners and (inaudible), and this cohesion (because there is this cohesion) he does not need this tremendously concentrated sovereign power which Hobbes surmised. It would be necessary (inaudible).

But this leads up to the difficulty at the end of the paragraph on page 95.

Reader: "The argument on which Hobbes rested the necessity of a self-perpetuating sovereign body, i.e., no election, is thus without basis in a class divided society with a cohesive possessive class by the very fact that a society is so divided tends to give it a sufficient degree of cohesion to the possessive class."

Strauss: Therefore, again, the individualism of Hobbes' doctrine is basic, and the consequence of the single sovereign who perpetuates (inaudible) where the sovereign is periodically elected.

The key question I think is this for him. At the end of paragraph 1, page 97, we must distinguish between individuals of the possessive and non-possessive market. The possessing classes are of course interested in preserving the sovereign who belongs to the possessive class. But what about the poor fellow--and what is his answer?

Student: On page 98 he says there is no rational choice but to acknowledge the sovereign to protect their rights, that there is no alternative in a possessive market society.

Strauss: If you look at page 98, the third paragraph, when he says to this poor fellow, yes, we can see no alternative to your possessive market society. Therefore, if he can see no alternative, he has no reasonable choice but to acknowledge obligation to a sovereign power to protect his life.

Page 100, the second paragraph.

Reader: "The most serious and persistent difficulty in Hobbes' theory when it is taken as a theory about man and society as such."

Strauss: I.e., as distinguished from a capitalist society.

Reader: "... is that men are moved as Hobbes has been moved by unlimited competitive appetite seem incapable of acknowledging a binding obligation which limits their motion."

Strauss: I mean a man who has studied Hobbes doesn't know the answer to that question? They are so competitive and unlimited, and if they are capable of acknowledging a binding obligation which limits them. But he dismisses this.

Now the other difficulty on page 101, paragraph two.

Reader: "Another logical difficulty is also easier to deal with when the whole theory is regarded in this way."

Strauss: Namely, a theory historically conditioned.

Reader: "Hobbes claimed as is shown from a scientific analysis of man's nature that men ought to acknowledge this steadier obligation to the sovereign than they do now acknowledge."

Strauss: Now he develops this in the sequel. We cannot read all of this. The difficulty is this. Hobbes claimed that he was the first to discover the true principle of poverty, but this is untenable, it is claimed, if under what conditions? Page 102, top. "He thought that men now (inaudible . . . ) less efficiently than they could do. But they could learn to do it under Hobbes' tutelage more efficiently."

Next paragraph--"If it is granted as the law of human nature that men always viewed new knowledge which they see to be to their advantage, their failure to have acknowledged any obligation to a sovereign hitherto, must be due to one of two reasons. Either they had not discovered that it was advantageous, for it had not in fact been as advantageous to them earlier as it was now."

Strauss: At the end of the third paragraph on page 103.

Reader: "If men's needs for moral and civil philosophy have always been so great, as Hobbes says, it should reasonably be expected they have made Hobbes' discovery earlier."

Strauss: Let me see whether I cannot state it more simply. Why were these principles--fear of violent death, submission to the sovereign, why were they not discovered much earlier? Now his argument is this: in the way in which Hobbes understood it, they could not be seen before the emergence of possessive market society, and therefore no one bothered to have Hobbes' progress. But Hobbes of course claims that this doctrine is universally valid, and not limited to possessive market society. Therefore, we must see whether Hobbes doesn't himself have an answer to this question. Why were these very simple things not discovered centuries prior to Hobbes? I mean after all this is not a doctrine of the kind of Galileo's physics. What is Hobbes' answer?

Let us state it in crude historical terms. What was the great obstacle to rational political philosophy prior to Hobbes?

Student: Religion.

Strauss: Well, religion generally--fear of powers invisible. As long as people believed in that, there was no possibility that they could take fear of violent death seriously. That's the main point. Now this applies of course not only to biblical but also to pagan religions. But still, Aristotle doesn't build his Politics on the fear of powers invisible. So there must be an additional reason.

What does Hobbes say about it? But what enabled them not to look at themselves, I mean in the Hobbian way, a special way of looking at oneself? For example, take Hobbes' chief objection. They were (inaudible). In other words, still negatively stated, they were too much concerned with showing their wisdom by controlling their government. Now, non-politically stated, they were very much concerned with having a standard by which they could judge the government, and distinguish between good and bad government. And Hobbes is certainly willing to give up this point, but it is hard to give it up. Therefore, no one thought of political terms in these problems--order, (inaudible), without any supernatural sanction. Both things, the absence of supernatural (inaudible) were seen by MacPherson. (Inaudible.)

By the way, Hobbes gives an explicit answer to MacPherson's question. Namely, how come that this was not discovered a long time ago--this whole Hobbian doctrine. We have read it here. Hobbes says in the preface to De cive, near the beginning, where he says prior to Socrates they knew this whole truth, they knew it, and they acted on these sound principles. So I think Hobbes has a perfectly sufficient explanation. Prior to him, this kind of low utilitarianism did not exist in the culture. That is surely true.

The so-called precursors of Locke--they were not strictly speaking utilitarians; they were much too much concerned with the glory and tyrannical power of the gifted individual. Hobbes rejects this. There is this kind of utilitarianism which existed before. And it is no accident that it did not exist because people are ordinarily not satisfied with that dreary abysmal notion of political society. This kind of sobriety which Hobbes had is a very late thing. I mean I do not deny that there were individuals who were perfectly satisfied with certain kinds of society, but they would never find a public hearing.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Hobbes has both, and he has given a solution for it. The fundamental natural law means simply, obey the government. Because you have promised to obey, and to keep the formed government is a duty overriding all citizens. And the second set of natural laws and moral laws are those of morality proper. Now they are valid, but they have no right of way against the primary natural law. So if the king prescribes, not exactly that you should kill or maim yourself, or that you should do something rather indecent, what you regard as indecent, perhaps with a show of public necessity, what can you do? Your self-preservation is not at stake. The moral duty is proper and is secondary compared with the duty to obey the government.

Now the case which Hobbes discusses at the greatest length although theoretically it is not the most important case is that of the obligation of Christians under a non-Christian sovereign. (Inaudible), namely to go to the temple and pray to the idols, hoping for Christ's second coming, and this we can do because it will not be a matter which can come to the attention of the sovereign.

Now what he says here about the duty of the Christians is also the duty of all men regarding the moral law. So Hobbes has criteria of criticism for the moral acts of the government. Only he says that the subject has no right to make use of them in speech, let alone in his actions.

Very simply stated, Hobbes contradicts himself. There are no criteria for distinguishing (inaudible) between kings and tyrants, and there are such criteria. He resolves the contra-

diction for practical purposes by saying there are such criteria, but you can never make any practical use of them. This is for practical purposes sufficient, because your criticism can never issue an action, not even in speech. But the difficulty of course remains if he says nevertheless, which is not true--the distinction between king and tyrant is purely arbitrary. It is not arbitrary. When we come to the chapter on the offices of the sovereign, and partly on the discussion of laws and punishments, it will become perfectly clear that Hobbes made a distinct distinction between decent and indecent government, or even indecent governmental action. Not arbitrary. But as I say, this contradicts and is in potential conflict with the absolute obedience of government.

I think it is really very simple. I do not know if I state it as simple as possible. The crude statements which became so famous--the so-called ethical relativism--are only a part of the whole, because Hobbes was a bit more intelligent, because Hobbes raised the question of why is there a duty of obeying the sovereign?

You know the question which is answered today by purely psychological-sociological studies is on loyalty, but for Hobbes that is of no interest, these various motives leading to loyalty. You know there are big books about that. Identically the same thing is demanded from every citizen. The variety of psychological motives does not explain this identical trend of loyalty. There must be a single psychological correspondent to the single phenomenon, loyalty. I mean that some people are loyal out of laziness. And others from conviction, others from a passion. That is all very true, but it is irrelevant to the question of what is the ground of the obligation to be loyal. Ethical relativism, as it is today simply understood, abandons Hobbes' question.



Lecture XII  
Seminar on Hobbes: February 12, 1964

(The first half of this lecture was garbled, and thus was not able to be transcribed.)

Strauss: Now what is the relevance of this issue for our present doctrine?

Student: The making of the utmost political importance of non-political doctrines occurs much prior to the 16th and 17th centuries which introduced scientific consequences, rather than the introduction of consistent religious . . .

Strauss: But still--granted that, but you must admit that this does not quite apply to the subject we are discussing now because the Hobbian doctrines, whatever their basis may be, were in their content political doctrines. The right of the sovereign, the duty of obedience of the subject. I believe the difference between Hobbes and Aristotle, to use a simple formula, can be discussed entirely without denying the fact (inaudible).

Student: I'm trying to understand the contrast between classical philosophy . . .

Strauss: I am wisely limiting myself to classical and modern political philosophy. Now if he doesn't speak about classical political life and modern political life, one would have to take into consideration the fact of the issue to which you are referring. But even then, I believe, we would find the crucial difference between religious doctrine, apart from the question of (inaudible) and ideology.

Student: But even in the realm of thought in political life, whether the middle ages don't go along with modern times in this respect rather than classical antiquity.

Strauss: Stated in political terms, that's the Repubblica Christiana, the Christian commonwealth, is in a sense surely a commonwealth, and to that extent a political phenomenon, if you mean that.

Student: I am wondering if there are not certain similarities between medieval and modern thought which set them apart from classical thought.

Strauss: That is a common view underlying most of the traditional historiography, but the reason why I prefer what Aristotle did is that this conceals one clear fact--that if you go to the medieval thinkers and not simply scripturally, then you come to something toward Aristotle, and when you do that with modern things, you see the rejection of Aristotle either completed or on its way. And that I believe is very important.

Student: May I draw a distinction from the (inaudible) which might be helpful. The Byzantines were still going on like the Arians and the Orthodox, killing each other because they were eternally damned because they had wrong religious ideas. The first to introduce the doctrine of how man should live in this world argued from holy scripture in a divisive fashion, advice which is taken only by a certain section of the Christian commonwealth is John Calvin. He sets up Geneva in a fashion . . .

Strauss: You mean because he taught differently about church government? What about the papalists and the imperialists? That was also politically (inaudible). If you take say an extreme papalist and an extreme imperialist, that is a very important political difference, which you must not minimize.

Student: It had already begun with the investiture, if not before.

Strauss: But surely throughout the Middle Ages there was this conflict between the Papalists and the imperialists, especially about the line where the respective jurisdictions lie.

But we must now turn to Hobbes' judicious opinion. The first one is De cive, tyrannicide is permitted -- a judicious opinion. This is not in the Leviathan under these terms, because Hobbes preferred apparently to discuss this in a broader context, namely on page 214. The imitation of the Greeks and Romans as a concept of tyrannicide is as it were only made reasonable. Now we should turn to this passage in the Leviathan. This is quite remarkable. Page 214, line 3.

Reader: "And as to Rebellion in particular against Monarchy; one of the most frequent causes of it, is the Reading of the books of Policy, and Histories of the ancient Greeks, and Romans; from which, young men, and all others that are unprovided of the Antidote of Solid Reason, receiving a strong, and delightfull impression, of the great exploits of warre . . . "

Strauss: And so on. "From the reading, I say, of such books . . . "

Reader: "From the rading, I say, of such books, men have undertaken to kill their Kings, because the Greek and Latine writers, in their books, and discourses of Policy, make it lawfull, and laudable, for any man to do so; provided before he do it, he call him Tyrant."

Strauss: That's a minor exaggeration.

Reader: "For they say not Regicide, that is, killing of a King, but Tyrannicide, that is, killing of a Tyrant is lawfull; from the same books, they that live under a Monarch

conceive an opinion, that the Subjects in a Popular Commonwealth enjoy Liberty; but that in a Monarchy they are all Slaves. I say, they that live under a Monarchy conceive such an opinion; not they that live under a Popular Government: for they find no such matter."

Strauss: Is this not terrific? This last sentence he omitted in the latin version of the Leviathan, written after the Restoration. So you see what he says. He admits here that people who say that republics are preferable to monarchies got a point. We can leave it here at this point.

The parallel in De cive contains something which is quite interesting which we don't have here, at the beginning of paragraph 3.

Reader: "The third seditious doctrine springs from the same root, that tyrannicide is lawful. Nay, at this day, it is by many divines, and of old it was by all the philosophers . . ."

Strauss: Sophists.

Reader: "Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, and the rest of the maintainers of the Greek and Roman anarchies, held not only lawful, but even worthy of the greatest praise."

Strauss: Now you see here this duty. Today it is maintained by some theologians and in a part by all (inaudible) philosophers. Some theologians; others do not say that. After all, the men who stood up on the side of the Stuarts and who would never have admitted that. So all traditional philosophy, because these are the great names from a humanistic point of view . . .

Here you have this passage--I've forgotten where I read it--about anarchists; they were anarchists because they made the individual with or without precautions the judge of the government. Naturally they did; that is what they were for, so to speak. And Hobbes of course cannot avoid it; that's the great trouble. It is absolutely impossible to avoid it because to repeat this simple thing again, if you say it is your moral duty to obey the government, you must be crazy for that. And these reasons become a standard by which you judge the government. You must obey the government because the government does these and these things. But if the government does not happen to do these things, then it doesn't live up to its conscience. It is tyrannical.

Now number four is in both works. What is that? That the government is subject to civil law. In De cive, paragraph 4, in the middle when he speaks of Aristotle.

Reader: "Yet this error hath great props, Aristotle and others; who, by reason of human infirmity, suppose the supreme power

to be committed with most security to the laws only. But they seem to have looked very shallowly into the nature of government, who thought that the constraining power, the interpretation of laws, and the making of laws, (all which are powers necessarily belonging to government) should be left wholly to the laws themselves."

Strauss: What he criticizes here is the doctrine of the concept of rule of law. And Hobbes says that for certain there cannot be rule of law; there can only be rule of a man or body of men. And this is a superficiality of Aristotle. Aristotle has not looked deeply enough; he was naive, where he simply looked at a popular (inaudible), and you know a kind of wish that the laws could rule.

At the end of this paragraph he says who are chiefly responsible for that error, apart from some philosophers--of course, the lawyers. Naturally. They want to control the sovereign, and they say that they are only interpreting the law.

Now was Aristotle guilty of this shallowness, or did Aristotle not see what Hobbes saw? Now what is the key point of Aristotle? Of course he speaks of rule of law and within the (inaudible) he is of course in favor of it. But what is the fundamental point? What is it in Aristotle's own terms? Law is from Aristotle's point of view secondary, compared with the regime. The discussion of this law is very nice, but what kind of laws? Do you mean the democratic laws or oligarchic laws or what have you? I.e., the regime; you cannot have democratic laws and so on.

So this is surely the fundamental phenomenon. That within these limits there is the possibility of a rule of laws, namely of such laws as are not dangerous to the regime. They will of course be supported by the regime. In other words, there is such a thing as lawlessness of the individuals and to some extent of the regime; I do not deny that, but the fundamental fact is the regime. And Aristotle is surely not guilty of this oversight.

Student: When you were discussing the third opinion, do you recall the list that Hobbes gave there of the philosophers who were given these opinions? Do you remember the passage in Behemoth from which he made the same listing . . . but there's one difference. Cato is not listed here and Plutarch is substituted.

Strauss: He is not listed in Behemoth either. He is perfectly correct, chronologically correct. That is a plain error that Hobbes ever had quoted Cato as a classical writer.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: I never said that one may not kill pride, but I would say it is not only a gamble for the individual because

it goes without saying, but also it depends. Some of you know when this murder took place in Vietnam, there were quite a few people who were elated about it; I didn't happen to be elated because I was not so sure whether the facts were correct. In principle, I believe, one cannot deny it. Hobbes makes one premise, that death is the greatest of all evils which I regard as a demonstrably wrong opinion. If death were the greatest evil, then it would follow--my private demonstration (I do not know whether it will convince anyone else) is this. I happen to admire quite a few people who are dead, either died now or a hundred thousand years ago, and I happen to despise quite a few people who are alive. Now if life would be the greatest good, that would be utterly (inaudible). So there must be something wrong with it.

Student: What would Hobbes say (inaudible) such as a Jewish rabbi living in Germany under the Hitler regime?

Strauss: There are only Jewish rabbis. That is a bit redundant.

Student: What would he say? Obedience to Hitler or (inaudible)?

Strauss: I suppose it is hard to say what a man can say under certain circumstances. I take it from (inaudible) that he would think he can be killed. Hobbes would surely say, because there is not a government for him. Hobbes admits that if the taxes are high or anything of this kind, this is impossible to (inaudible) or if he kills other people. But this rabbi is in approximate danger of being killed himself. That is the point which is decisive for Hobbes. So that is the simple case of conscience, if we can speak of cases of conscience at all.

But we must now go on. Number 5. That government could be divided exists in Leviathan also, on page 213. Now this point is much more extensive in De cive than in Leviathan. The reason is probably that in a way the later discussion of the church government may be superfluous to this whole discussion.

Number 6 in De cive which corresponds to number 3 in Leviathan, page 212, paragraph two, which we should read in the version in the Leviathan because it is much clearer.

Reader: "It hath been also commonly taught, That Faith and Sanctity, are not to be attained by Study and Reason, but by supernaturall Inspiration, or Infusion, which granted, I see not why any man should render a reason of his Faith; or why every Christian should not be also a Prophet; or why any man should take the Law of his Country, rather than his own Inspiration, for the rule of his action. And thus wee fall again into the fault of taking upon us to Judge of Good and Evill; or to make Judges of it, such private man as pretend to be supernaturally Inspired, to the Dissolution of all Civill Government.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by those accidents, which guide us into the presence of them that speak to us; which accidents are all contrived by God Almighty; and yet are not supernatural, but onely, for the great number of them that concur to every effect, unobservable. Faith, and Sanctity, are indeed not very frequent; but yet they are not Miracles, but brought to passe by education, discipline, correction, and other natural wayes, by which God worketh them in his elect, at such time as he thinketh fit. And these three opinions, pernicious to Peace and Government, have in this part of the world, proceeded chiefly from the tongues, and pens of unlearned Divines; who joyning the words of Holy Scripture together, otherwise than is agreeable to reason, do what they can, to make men think, that Sanctity and Natural Reason, cannot stand together."

Strauss: Here you have the principle why he changed the arrangements. The first three opinions are theological or pseudo-theological opinions, and the others are of a different description. This is of no fundamental importance, but it simply shows that we must recognize the reason why he changed the arrangement here.

Student: At the beginning of this, you said that seditious documents play a greater part in De cive. It seems to me that there are gnawing seditious documents discussed in the Leviathan.

Strauss: Then you counted differently than I did; I counted 8 in De cive and 6 in the Leviathan. Six doctrines on page 213, paragraph three, and there is no other doctrine because the next point is called the example, the imitation of neighbor nations.

The seventh opinion in De cive, what is that? The individual citizen has absolute ownership of their possessions. We could read a bit of that.

Reader: "The seventh doctrine opposite to government, is this, that each subject hath an absolute dominion over the goods he is in possession of, that is to say, such a propriety as excludes not only the right of all the rest of his fellow-subjects to the same goods, but also of the magistrate himself."

Strauss: Government.

Reader: "Which is not true; for they who have a lord over them, have themselves no lordship, as hath been proved."

Strauss: No lordship in the sense of property, dominion. It has been proven in Chapter 8, and chapter 8 is the chapter on slaves and masters. Of course, slaves have no property; we know that. But now it is applied to the citizens in general. That's very interesting. And he has to take something here discussed under the heading of master-slave relations rather than

paternal government or to say nothing of (inaudible).

On the other hand, we see a change--this is omitted here in the Leviathan on page 213, but the second paragraph on page 213 has no parallel in De cive.

Reader: "And if the propriety of subjects excludes not the Right of the Sovereign Representative to their Goods; much lesse to their offices of Judicature, or Execution, in which they Represent the Sovereign himselfe."

Strauss: What does he mean by that?

Student: That the common law could not stand against the will of the king.

Strauss: I do not think so, and I believe he means the right to offices. In other words, there is of course still less property rights in offices, in judging offices, and that goes without saying; for us we have forgotten that, (inaudible).

Now the eighth thing which is also absent from De cive, or from the Leviathan, is . . .

Student: Article 8, page 135.

Strauss: Yes, and continues with the (inaudible) to ignore the difference between the people and the multitude. Let us only read the end of this paragraph. We know that a multitude is simply a number of human beings which is politically utterly irrelevant because it is simply . . . and some nation of individuals. It becomes a political thing by a political action. If it is a monarchy, the people is the king. It has no political existence except in the king, the person representing all of them. Now let us read the end of this paragraph.

Reader: "And forasmuch as in all manner of government majesty is to be preserved by him or them who have the supreme authority, the crimen laesae majestatis naturally cleaves to these opinions."

Strauss: Naturally has here a full meaning--by nature. There is a natural law, and in this case a natural penal law, a natural constitutional law. This is not dependent on human arbitrary will or the will of the human legislator, whether he (inaudible). That is quite important.

Now in the Leviathan we have seen this imitation of other nations and some false opinions on page 213-216. This has no parallel in De cive, but on the other hand the subject of page 216 in the Leviathan, of money and so on till the end of the paragraph, is more fully than in De cive. One could very well say this section, 213-216, repeats also this opinion, although not explicitly. There are quite a few remarks which

are quite interesting here. Read only page 215, the fourth paragraph.

Reader: "Hitherto I have named such diseases of a Commonwealth, as are of the greatest, and most present danger. There be other, not so great; which nevertheless are not unfit to be observed. As first, the difficulty of raising Money, for the necessary uses of the Commonwealth; especially in the approach of warre. This difficulty ariseth from the opinion, that every Subject hath of a Propriety in his lands and goods, exclusive of the Sovereigns Right to the use of the same."

Strauss: You see here the use of the word opinion, and not doctrine. There is a subtle difference between the use of these two words. This discussion of monopolies and abuses of publicans not in De cive -- the whole economic question is not discussed; this is an innovation of the Leviathan.

Student: One difference which struck me which you mentioned is that he seems to use the images of biology much more in the Leviathan, where in De cive he uses more emotion.

Strauss: In the introduction you have this comparison of the leviathan to a man. I do not know; whether this has something to do with the more rhetorical, more pictorial character of the Leviathan, that could very well be.

Student: In the beginning of Chapter 12 of De cive, he mentions emotion.

Strauss: Well, motions are the key to everything. I had some difficulty following his comparison of the diseases of the body politic and those of the body natural. Cooperation should be like warm--that is probably one of the most quoted passages.

By the way, at the end of this chapter we have other evidence for the immortal soul. You may remember we spoke about Hobbes' using or not using the term soul, and here in the middle of the last paragraph . . .

Reader: "The Sovereign is the publique Soule, giving Life and Motion to the Commonwealth; which expiring, the Members are governed by it no more, than the Carcasse of a Man, by his departed (though Immortall) Soule."

Strauss: Since we cannot read this part of the Leviathan, I suggest we have a look at Chapter 38, page 294, bottom. This means of course that Hobbes here takes it for granted that there is an immortal soul of the individual.

Reader: "But if these words be to be understood only of the Immortality of the Soul, they prove not at all that which our Saviour intended to prove; which was the Resurrection of the



Body, that is to say, the Immortality of the Man."

Strauss: Of the man, not of the soul. Now a bit later on the same page . . .

Reader: "That the Soul of man is in its own nature Eternall, and a living Creature independent on the body; or that any meer man is Immortall, otherwise than by the Resurrection in the last day, (except Enos and Elias,) is a doctrine not apparent in Scripture."

Strauss: Now in the context that simply means that Hobbes would not say that the natural reason can settle that. If Hobbes deduced anything of this kind, (inaudible) resurrection of the body, not of the soul. I only mention this because the question of the soul came up last time.

Now a few more words about the last section of De cive, paragraph 10, we have at the beginning another passage which we might read.

Reader: "Another noxious disease of the mind is theirs, who having little employment, want honour and dignity. All men naturally strive for honour and preferment; but chiefly . . ."

Strauss: All men by nature. There was some confusion regarding this issue in an earlier part of our discussion.

Paragraph 11 is absent from the Leviathan. Hobbes develops this theme much more fully. Read the first 10 lines of paragraph 11.

Reader: "The hope of overcoming is also to be numbered among other seditious inclinations. For let there be as many men . . ."

Strauss: The hope of victory.

Reader: "as you will, infected with opinions repugnant to peace and civil government; let there be as many as there can, never so much wounded and torn with affronts and calumnies by them who are in authority; yet if there be no hope of having the better of them, or it appear not sufficient, there will no sedition follow; every man will dissemble his thoughts, and rather content himself with the present burthen, than hazard a heavier weight."

Strauss: It is not uninteresting that Hobbes regards it as impossible that a man might kill a tyrant out of despair, though he knew that he would be killed by the bodyguard.

The next paragraph is a very interesting paragraph and we might read a few lines of that.

Reader: "Sallust's character of Cataline (than whom there never was a greater artist in raising seditions) is this: that he had great eloquence, and little wisdom. He separates wisdom from eloquence, attributing this as necessary to a man born for commotions, adjudging that as an instructress of peace and quietness. Now eloquence is twofold. The one is an elegant and clear expression of the conceptions of the mind, and riseth partly from the contemplation of the things themselves, partly from an understanding of words taken in their own proper and definite signification. The other is a commotion of the passions of the mind (such as are hope, fear, anger, pity) and derives from a metaphorical use of words fitted to the passions. That forms a speech from true principles; this from opinions already received, what nature soever they are of. The art of that is logic, of this rhetoric; the end of that is truth, of this victory. Each hath its use; that in deliberations, this in exhortations."

Strauss: It is very striking that the Hobbian distinction between the right and wrong kind of rhetoric differing very much from the platonic form. It is very interesting that one kind of eloquence belongs to logic. There's a twofold eloquence, and the one which is the good one is the art of logic, and the one which is the wicked one, the art of pleasure. Now deliberative rhetoric is governed by logic. That is not exactly the Aristotelian doctrine. The rhetorical kind of argument, whatever that is, would of course also enter deliberation--naturally. If you address a multitude and want to show them that this law is sound, you cannot leave it at merely stating clearly the sound reasons for it; you must appeal to the emotions.

I believe that Hobbes thought of deliberation as governable by logical law and has something to do with this emphasis on doctrine. Naturally he was thinking primarily of cabinets--deliberation in cabinets, rather than deliberations in public assemblies. Nevertheless, it is very striking.

Now finally another point at the end of paragraph 13. Read this whole story. What is the chapter about? What does he say? The stupidity of the vulgar and the eloquence of the ambitious men compared to the dissolution of the commonwealth. And then he comes to speak of Medea.

Reader: "For folly and eloquence concur in the subversion of government, in the same manner (as the fable hath it) as heretofore the daughters of Pelias, king of Thessaly, conspired with Medea against their father. They going to restore the decrepit old man to his youth again by the counsel of Medea, they cut him into pieces, and set him in the fire to boil, in vain expecting when he would live again. So the common people, through their folly (like the daughters of Pelias) desiring to renew the ancient government, being drawn away by the eloquence of ambitious men, as it were by the witchcraft of Medea, divided into faction, they consume it rather by those flames, than they reform it."

Strauss: He changed it. In Latin he has more frequently, more frequently they consume it than they reform it. Now that's a terrific change; sometimes they do reform it. That's remarkable isn't it. Because there is of course no intrinsic possibility that what we call revolution (inaudible). And Hobbes brought it into line in the English version.

I think it is quite good to compare the various editions, and see that Hobbes thought nature more complex.

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: What do you say now? Oh, the greater emphasis on the patrimonial state. I must say I do not have a unitary theory regarding the changes which Hobbes made when writing the Leviathan compared with the earlier writings. I do not even expect that I could elaborate now because it would require much more work. We had a relatively short assignment so it was easier for me to go into these things, and on other occasions we have a larger assignment and in a way I'm also a student. In addition, it is not (inaudible) of course to compare the De cive Latin with the English Leviathan; one would also have to consider the English De cive and which is more important, the Latin Leviathan. To say nothing of the Elements of Law. I thought I should only mention these things because you never can tell there may be a man or a body of men among you who is willing to devote much of his time to a thorough study of Hobbes. There was a time when I believed I was meant to do that -- who would really write an intellectual biography of Hobbes. Needless to say you would have to have a good command of Latin. I don't believe it could fundamentally affect the overall picture of Hobbes' doctrine, but it would be instructive nevertheless, because human beings in general and especially very gifted human beings are interested in worthwhile subjects.

Lecture XIII

Seminar on Hobbes: February 17, 1964

Strauss: If there are clearly defined limits of government, it is possible for reasonable men to say that this government is good, and that government bad. In simple terms, in the state of monarchy, it is the king or the tyrant. This cannot be questioned, and this is also no true contradiction because Hobbes says that under no circumstances may you act on that because by acting on that you bring about chaos and chaos is worse than tyrannical government.

Now let us then turn to our assignment. First De Cive, Chapter 13, and Leviathan, Chapter 30, belong together. Let us use De Cive as a basis and then see what he changed in the Leviathan. Now the first paragraph in Chapter 13 has no parallel in the Leviathan. Let us read the beginning of the paragraph.

Reader: "By what hath hitherto been said, the duties of citizens and subjects in any kind of government whatsoever, and the power of the supreme ruler over them are apparent. But we have as yet said nothing of the duties of rulers, and how they ought to behave themselves towards their subjects. We must then distinguish between the right and the exercise of supreme authority, for they can be divided; as for example, when he who hath the right, either cannot or will not be present in judging trespasses, or deliberating of affairs."

Strauss: Here he develops that. Why does he then proceed to the distinction of right and (inaudible) when he speaks of the citizens of government? The distinction is obvious that a sovereign may delegate part of his power to others, but always retains of course the right to (inaudible).

I believe it is cleared up in paragraph three to some extent, and the parallel in the Leviathan is page 293, the second paragraph.

Reader: "And this is intended should be done, not by care applyed to Individualls, further than their protection from injuries, when they shall complain; but by a generall Providence, contained in publique Instruction, both of Doctrine, and Example; and in the making, and executing of good Lawes, to which Individuall persons may apply their own cases."

Strauss: I believe what Hobbes has in mind is this. That sovereigns must always be absolved, that is omnipotent, or as omnipotent as is humanly possible. But the constant exercise of that right would be highly undesirable. In other words, the right of sovereignty is ordinarily in a state of dormancy, or should be, because that is a sign of civility and order.

Let us turn again to De Cive, and the end of the second paragraph.

Reader: "Now as the safety of the people dictates a law by which princes know their duty, so doth it also teach them an art how to procure themselves a benefit, for the power of the

citizens is the power of the city, that is to say, his that bears the chief rule in any state."

Strauss: He makes here a distinction between the law through which princes know their duty and the art of by which princes procure for themselves their own good. After all, that is in a way the problem. There is such a thing as say the moral duties of the government, and on the other hand the clearly selfish consideration of the prince. But somehow the natural law of self understanding teaches the prince both the selfish benefits and the duties, that coincide (inaudible). This also has no parallel in the Leviathan.

Now paragraph 4 which is very clear has no parallel in the Leviathan either. We should read that.

Reader: "But by safety must be understood . . . "

Strauss: In other words, there is one general rule, the safety of the people, or the salvation of the people -- salvation is a bit more than the safety of the people.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: I think what Hobbes has in mind by stating here the difference between right of sovereignty and the exercise is that Hobbes thinks the full right of sovereignty would ordinarily be in a state of dormancy. Simply, regular administration where the monarch or the sovereign doesn't have to come in all the time. In other words, Hobbes is in favor of enlightened despotism.

Now let us read paragraph four.

Reader: "But by safety must be understood, not the sole preservation of life in what condition soever, but in order to its happiness. For to this end did men freely assemble themselves, and institute a government . . . "

Strauss: In the Latin it is more clear, and men came together spontaneously and (inaudible) a society, a commonwealth, where you start with the free will and have an assembly, and not submission, subjection.

Reader: ". . . that they might, as much as their human condition would afford, live delightfully. They therefore who had undertaken the administration of power in such a kind of government, would sin against the law of nature (because against their trust who had committed that power unto them), if they should not study, as much as by good laws could be affected, to furnish their subjects abundantly, not only with the good things belonging to life, but also with those which advance to delectation."

Strauss: Abundance.

Reader: "They who have acquired dominion by arms, do all desire that their subjects may be strong in body and mind, that they may serve them the better. Wherefore if they should not endeavour to provide them, not only with such things whereby they may live, but also with such whereby they may grow strong and lusty, they would act against their own scope and end."

Strauss: Still, the people who enter in civil society seem to be slightly better off than the others, for the other is only the king (inaudible . . . ), whereas in the other case there is a moral duty involved, where entering the society as free men there (inaudible). The official dogma is of course that the right of sovereignty is the same whether it is a conqueror or a freely established state. There is a slight edge in favor of the freely established society.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: The desirable thing from Hobbes' point of view would be a constituent assembly but his whole doctrine compels him to say that from an immediate point of view it doesn't make any difference.

Paragraphs five and six have no parallel in the Leviathan, no direct parallel. Paragraph five deals with an interesting question whether the king is under an obligation to reestablish the religion which he regards as true.

Reader: "And first of all, princes do believe that it mainly concerns eternal salvation, what opinions are held of the Deity, and what manner of worship he is to be adored with. Which being supposed, it may be demanded whether chief rulers, and who-soever they be, whether one or more, who exercise supreme authority, sin not against the law of nature, if they cause not such a doctrine and worship to be taught and practised (or permit a contrary to be taught and practised) as they believe necessarily conduceth to the eternal salvation of their subjects. It is manifest that they act against their conscience, and that they will, as much as in them lies, the eternal perdition of their subjects; for if they willed it not, I see no reason why they should suffer (when being supreme they cannot be compelled) such things to be taught and done, for which they believe them to be in a damnable state."

Strauss: So that establishes it. So every prince is morally bound to establish the kind of religion which he regards as true and to not tolerate anything else. Next sentence.

Reader: "But we will leave this difficulty in suspense."

Strauss: Anyway, this is completely dropped in the Leviathan.

The Leviathan has replaced it by this very long discussion on pages 219, paragraph three, to page 275, duty to instruct the subject, to which he has devoted one paragraph 9 in De cive. The main theme of course is the reform of the university.

Now a few points which are particularly interesting in the Leviathan which have no parallel in De cive. On page 220, paragraph two, Hobbes says this point about the absolute necessity of a natural law foundation, and that the duty of obeying the sovereign is not a civil law foundation, and I believe it is absolutely correct.

Page 220, paragraph three. (Inaudible.) Sovereignty as Hobbes understands it is something entirely novel in theory and in fact. And what is Hobbes' answer?

Reader: "Wherein they argue as ill, as if the Savage people of America, should deny there were any grounds, or Principles of Reason, so to build a house, as to last as long as the materials, because they never yet saw any so well built. Time, and Industry, produce every day new knowledge. And as the art of well building, is derived from Principles of Reason, observed by industrious men, that had long studied the nature of materials, and the divers effects of figure, and proportion, long after mankind began (though poorly) to build: So, long time after men have begun to constitute Commonwealths, imperfect, and apt to relapse into disorder, there may, Principles of Reason be found out, by industrious meditation, to make their constitution (excepting by external violence) everlasting. And such are those which I have in this discourse set forth: Which whether they come not into the sight of those that have Power to make use of them, or be neglected by them, or not, concerneth my particular interest, at this day, very little."

Strauss: And he continues that, and we see in the next paragraph, page 221, the essential rights which are the natural and fundamental laws of sovereigns. The expression 'fundamental laws' was quite common in the constitutional history of that time. For example, the laws regarding succession, laws regarding royal domain. But here we have fundamental laws of sovereignty which are at the same time natural laws.

Let us consider a few more passages--page 225, when he speaks about the use of universities in the first paragraph.

Reader: "But are not the Universities of England learned enough already to do that? or is it you will undertake to teach the Universities?"

Strauss: To teach the universities. A man who had not a Ph.d, but only a B.A.

Reader: "Hard questions. Yet to the first, I doubt not to answer; that till towards the later end of Henry the eighth, the Power of the Pope, was always upheld against the Power of the Common-wealth, principally by the Universities; and that

the doctrines maintained by so many Preachers, against the Sovereign Power of the King, and by so many Lawyers, and others, that had their education there, is a sufficient argument, that though the Universities were not authors of those false doctrines, yet they knew not how to plant the true. For in such a contradiction of Opinions, it is most certain, that they have not been sufficiently instructed; and 'tis no wonder, if they yet retain a relish of that subtile liquor, wherewith they were first seasoned, against the Civill Authority. But to the later question, it is not fit, nor needfull for me to say either I, or No: for any man that sees what I am doing, may easily perceive what I think."

Strauss: It is obvious that he does want to teach universities. A few more passages regarding this issue on page 230 in the middle of the paragraph.

Reader: "The best signes of Knowledge of any Art, are, much conversing in it, and constant good effects of it. Good Counsell comes not by Lot, nor by Inheritance; and therefore there is no more reason to expect good Advice from the rich, or noble, in matter of State, than in delineating the dimensions of a fortresse; unlesse we shall think there needs no method in the study of the Politiques, (as there does in the study of Geometry,) but onely to be lookers on; which is not so. For the Politiques is the harder study of the two. Whereas in these parts of Europe, it hath been taken for a Right of certain persons, to have place in the highest Councell of State by Inheritance; it is derived from the Conquests of the antient Germans; wherein many absolute Lords joyning together to conquer other Nations, would not enter in to the Confederacy, without such Priviledges, as might be marks of difference in time following, between their Posterity, and the Posterity of their Subjects; which Priviledges being inconsistent with the Sovereign Power, by the favour of the Sovereign, they may seem to keep; but contending for them as their Right, they must needs by degrees let them go, and have at last no further honour, then adhaereth naturally to their abilities."

Strauss: You see how democratic Hobbes is, when there are no longer any rights or liberty, (inaudible), and that means fundamentally of a democratically understood sovereign, even if in practice Hobbes favors monarchy, and that is an institutive monarchy, a monarchy which ultimately comes into being by the constituent assembly, where all members of the society are of course equal members.

Now one more passage about this subject on page 241.

Reader: "And thus farre concerning the Constitution, Nature, and Right of Sovereigns, and concerning the Duty of Subjects, derived from the Principles of Naturall Reason."

Strauss: In other words, his is an entirely rational doctrine.



And rational means here also that it is not based on experience; I mean Aristotle did claim that his Politics was rational (inaudible), but the teaching is based to a certain extent on experience. Hobbes ends as much in an ought in how men should live as the others did; only the content of that ought is quite different. Go on.

Reader: "And now, considering how different this Doctrine is, from the Practise of the greatest part of the world, especially of these Western parts, that have received their Morall learning from Rome, and Athens; and how much depth of the Morall Philosophy is required, in them that have the Administration of the Sovereign Power; I am at the point of believing this my labour, as uselesse, as the Common-wealth of Plato; For he . . . "

Strauss: Namely as utopia. Although it is not built on virtue, but rests on the solid foundation of fear of violent death.

Reader: "For he also is of opinion that it is impossible for the disorders of State, and change of Governments by Civill Warre, ever to be taken away, till Sovereigns be Philosophers. But when I consider again, that the Science of Naturall Justice, is the onely Science necessary for Sovereigns, and their principall Ministers; and that they need not be charged with the Sciences Mathematicall, (as by Plato they are,) further, than by good Lawes to encourage men to the study of them; and that neither Plato, nor any other Philosopher hitherto, . . . "

Strauss: Hobbes is the first political scientist or political philosopher.

Reader: "hath put into order, and sufficiently, or probably proved all the Theoremes of Morall doctrine, that men may learn thereby, both how to govern, and how to obey; I recover some hope, that one time or other, this writing of mine, may fall into the hands of a Sovereign, who will consider it himsele, (for it is short, and I think clear,) without the help of any interssed, or envious Interpreter; and by the exercise of entire Sovereignty, in protecting the Publique teaching of it, convert this Truth of Speculation, into the Utility of Practice."

Strauss: And that of course has happened. Some modifications were necessary. Locke had to come in, Rousseau had to come in, Montequieu had to come in, but that was done--the truth of civilization was converted into practice.

There are a few more passages in this section; I will call your attention to page 223 in the second paragraph, which is very interesting regarding the relation of the father and the commonwealth.

Reader: "To which end they are taught that originally the father of every man was also his sovereign law, with power over him of life and death. And that the fathers of families, when by instituting a commonwealth, they resigned that absolute power, yet it was never intended they should lose the honour due into them for their education."

Strauss: This is the same thought expressed before on page 153, which we discussed on another occasion. On the same page at the bottom you find a hierarchy of goods according to Hobbes. Those that are dearest to a man are his own life and limb, and in the next degree in most men, those that concern conjugal affection, and after them, which is a means of living. This is a hierarchy according to which of course rewards and punishments have to be determined.

We turn now to the beginning of paragraph 7 in De cive.

Reader: "There are two things necessary for the people's defence; to be warned and to be forearmed. For the state of commonwealths considered in themselves, is natural, that is to say, hostile. Neither if they cease from fighting, is it therefore to be called peace, but rather a breathing time."

Strauss: The consequences are clear for Hobbes. There cannot be an international law, strictly speaking. He discussed in paragraphs seven and eight the duties of governing the fallen enemy, and that is in Leviathan, page 231, paragraph 3 following.

In De cive he speaks at some length about the fact that it is not only the right but the duty to send out spies, and the position of the spies is of course quite interesting because they are not public officers in a sense. They don't have public credentials. I think he must have done this with some amusement, these enemies of the public power. There is no question for Hobbes that the government has the right to send out spies.

The more important general statement in Leviathan, page 232 at the top of the page. "The law of nations" -- what we call international law -- "and the law of nature is the same thing." This means that every community is under a moral obligation to behave in a decent, civilized fashion to any other community when it is safe to do so. I.e., it is not a strict moral obligation, because each government must judge. For example, wheat to Russia, is it safe to do so or not? If it is safe, it would be our duty to help poor people. If they are poor by their own fault or not is not necessarily a relevant consideration. The implication of this is that there is no positive international law. Every government is a judge of its so-called international obligations.

Student: I'm still a little troubled about our state of nature, about how decent we must be, or a man had to be in that state of nature.

Strauss: The utmost he is capable of in the state of nature is to have good intentions, that he would love to be decent if he could, but he can't. But nations are different from individuals. Let us say there is a famine in one country and the other has a very good harvest, and they can simply say, well, we'll help you, and the other's expectation is obviously the same, and this may actually happen, unbelievable as it sounds. It could be, but you can never trust it, because there may be a situation in which the danger of war is very great, and it would be very wrong of the government to send the food out.

The natural law is easy to know, and that is not the point. The question is whether it is a critical situation or not a critical situation. Especially since one of the important data of the government to judge is the intentions of the government.

Now let us come to paragraph 10 in De cive, and let us read the beginning only.

Reader: "In the next place we showed that grief of mind arising from want did dispose the subjects to sedition, which want, although derived from their own luxury and sloth, yet they impute it to those who govern the realm, as though they were drained and oppressed by public pensions. Notwithstanding, it may sometimes happen that this complaint may be just, namely, when the burthens of the realm are unequally imposed on the subjects;"

Strauss: There may be just complaints against the government, and this turns up later on in the same paragraph. In the Leviathan, page 226, paragraph two, in this context, he avoids the term justice. For injustice he speaks of inequity, which is his semantic solution to this problem.

It goes without saying that domestic peace is the duty of the government and it is necessary to suppress seditious people and that means ambitious people.

This sentence: "The honour of great persons is to be valued for their beneficence (inaudible) or not at all." This is a complete break with the morality of honour of which Hobbes has spoken of in a number of passages. The whole position and the moral claim of the feudal nobility are simply rejected by Hobbes. These are the practical implications of Hobbes' criticism of pride.

In paragraph 14 of De cive and page 227 of the Leviathan, the chief point is labour and thrift, rather than the gifts of nature and water. These are the source of wealth, and labour is improved greatly by the application of mathematics.

On page 227 of the Leviathan in the second paragraph, you see what Hobbes says about countries. Hobbes' identification of the law of nations with the law of nature does have some humanizing effect. If you will read the second half of that paragraph . . .

Reader: "The multitude of poor and troubled strong people still increase; they are to be transplanted in the countries not sufficiently inhabited, where nevertheless they are not to exterminate those they find there."

Strauss: No good purpose would be served by that.

Reader: "But to strain them to inhabit closer together, and not to range a great deal of ground, dispatch what they find but to court each little plot with labour, to give them their source."

Strauss: You see how decent Hobbes can be?

Reader: "And when all the world is overcharged with inhabitants, then the last remedy of all is warre, which provideth for every man by victory or death."

Strauss: In other words, this cannot be changed. In the case of fear and conflict between morality and self-preservation, self-preservation has the right of way.

Then he discusses in paragraph 15 the good laws, and in the Leviathan page 227-228. Page 228, paragraph 2--this is not in De cive, at least in this chapter, but we will probably find it in the chapter on laws.

Paragraph 16 in De cive, and pages 228-229 in Leviathan.

Now let us come to the last chapter, Chapter 31, which has its parallel in De cive, but in a different context. In De cive, Chapter 15 belongs to the third part of De cive, with the title religion. But in the Leviathan Hobbes drew the line differently, and now religion belongs to the second part of the Leviathan.

Let us read the end of the preceding paragraph.

Reader: "But God reigneth; whose Lawes, (such as them as oblige all Mankind,) in respect of God, as he is the Author of Nature, are Naturall; and in respect of the same God, as he is King of Kings, are Lawes, but of the Kingdome of God, as King of Kings, and as King also of a peculiar People, I shall speak in the rest of this discourse."

Strauss: He separates here laws and naturall. There are rules which are natural, and there are laws, but when you take them together, you have the difficulty which we have seen in other ways before. Hobbes has first to speak of the kingdom of God by nature, as the kingdom of God as it is known independently of revelation. And then the question, who are subjects in the kingdom of God? And he reaches here a quite unorthodox solution. For example, the atheists are not subject to God because they do not recognize the kingdom of God, and the conclusion at the end of the first paragraph on page 233 . . .

Reader: "And they therefore that believe there is a God that governeth the world, and hath given Praecepts, and propounded Rewards, and Punishments to Mankind, are Gods Subjects; all the rest, are to be understood as Enemies."

Strauss: So that God's rights against the denials of his power are the rights of any sovereign against the enemy.

On page 234, the second paragraph.

Reader: "The right of nature whereby God reigneth over men, and punisheth those that break his Lawes, is to be derived, not from his Creating them, as if he required obedience, as of Gratitude for his benefits; but from his Irresistible Power."

Strauss: At the end of this paragraph.

Reader: "To those therefore whose Power is irresistible, the dominion of all men adhaereth naturally by their excellence of Power; and consequently it is from that Power, that the Kingdome over men, and the Right of afflicting men at his pleasure, belongeth Naturally to God Almighty; not as Creator, and Gracious, but as Omnipotent. And though Punishment be due for Sinne onely, because by that word is understood affliction for Sinne; yet the Right of Afflicting, is not alwayes derived from mens Sinne, but from Gods Power."

Strauss: What does he mean by that? By the way in the Latin translation, he omits in both cases the phrase 'not as Creator, and Gracious'. In other words, he does not indicate what he denies by saying that the rights generally derive of course from his omnipotence alone, not from his goodness; that's the key point. Why does he do that? In a way, all theology of Hobbes is a kind of metaphorical expression of what he really thinks; that is true. Omnipotence is willing to climb; goodness is not willing to climb; why not? It is very strange, because if we had time to go over his theoretical chapters, you would find for example that he denies the existence of the devil and admits the existence of angels. He denies hell, but admits heaven. So in one respect Hobbes is really trying to mitigate traditional theology. In this respect and in most important respects, he throws out goodness and leaves only power or omnipotence. How come?

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: But still, with some kindness implied, the father at least permits the mother to raise the child. That is not directly related to that. But we have here another point earlier in Hobbes--what about when he spoke of necessity and freedom? What was the implication of that?

Student: Why God would be the cause of evil in the world?

Strauss: That's it; exactly. God has the right to afflict men wholly independently of whether they deserve or not. Of course there were famous theological discussions especially in the Calvinist period, whether (inaudible) eternal punishment precedes any thought of power. God determines whether you will be elected and the (inaudible) condemned without any consideration and this played a great role in Hobbian England at that time. Hobbes was not a part of this.

Hobbes is willing to speak of a first cause of unlimited power but he cannot call it good.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: No, I think he wishes to allude here to the fact which he does not in any way develop here that he is not thinking in terms of God as creator at all. This cannot be settled on the basis of the Leviathan; one would have to study De Corpora and some of the later writings.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: But we have seen from the chapter on power, that if power goes together with goodness, then power is in a way achieved. It means that any notion of goodness must be taken away.

Now we come to the question about the political implications.  
Page 240.

Reader: "But seeing a Common-wealth is but one Person, it ought also to exhibite to God but one Worship; which then it doth when it commandeth it to be exhibited by Private men."

Strauss: What does he mean by private men? What about the government? Go on.

Reader: "And this is Publique Worship; the property whereof, is to be Uniforme: For those actions that are done differently, by different men, cannot be said to be a Publique Worship. And therefore, where many sorts of Worship be allowed, proceeding from the different Religions of Private men, it cannot be said there is any Publique Worship, nor that the Common-wealth is of any Religion at all."

Strauss: This seems to be regarded here as an entirely bad practice, but possible, because a commonwealth is (inaudible.). Now where is the difficulty when you would turn to that paragraph in the appendix on page 456 -- "At the same time the power was also taken from the Presbyterians who were of course very much concerned with public virtues." And so we are reduced to the independency of the primitive questions so far as (inaudible), which we would speak without contention is the best. In other words, Hobbes does not really assert that if a government does not

exhibit to God but one worship, it neglects its duty. In the Latin Leviathan, it is said, and I translate to you, "since the commonwealth is a single person, it may exhibit singular worship to God, i.e., the worship commanded by the civil law, which cult is called public and cannot be public unless it is uniform."

There is I believe also another passage on page 236 -- no, this is not necessary.

Now Hobbes never bends further than that, than he says it is a matter of indifference whether the government establishes uniform religion or establishes any religion or does not establish religion. In the first case the commonwealth has a religion; in the second case, the commonwealth has no religion. Both are equally possible. But this implies of course the admission that a commonwealth without religion, according to his definition of it, is possible. This is, I believe, the basis on which shortly after Hobbes (inaudible), the famous French Hugenot living in Holland, wrote his thoughts about a comment--I do not know the year--in which the centerpiece of that book is a society of atheists is possible. I believe that is the first time that such a thing was ever taught. The ancient people took it for granted that there will always be gods of the polis.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: The sovereign can draw the line wherever he likes, and can say for example that every man must be a member of some sect. From Hobbes' point of view he can do that. (Inaudible.) But then we would have to go on to the next part of the Leviathan, where he speaks of the Christian commonwealth, and where the question comes up in the most practical problem -- can the sovereign of a Christian state abolish Christianity? Of course he can; otherwise, he wouldn't be sovereign. The only people who have the right to protest are the bishops. The others have to obey. But Hobbes adds that no sovereign in his senses will ever dream of that because if Christianity is what Hobbes thought it is, nothing but one training for implicit obedience to the civil sovereign, and he would be very foolish if he would destroy that pillar of his power.

As far as right is concerned, there is no doubt about that. Hobbes really draws all the conclusions from sovereignty, and you must understand that these things sound all terribly harsh when such a beast from Malmesbury as he was called said them, but as a matter of fact if you look at the modern doctrine of sovereignty in practice, then the English state, the House of Commons, can be everything, except making a man a woman. What does it mean? It could of course be the established church. In all doctrines of sovereignty that is implied, that the sovereign alone determines what will and will not be done. All other things are strictly speaking recommendations.

The situation is somewhat complicated in the United States because of the Constitution and because you are never confronted

with sovereignty proper, but if you read the question, where does the Constitution come from, then of course you come back to the people. They cannot constitutionally change that except in certain ways. This is fortunately no practical issue, but theoretically the question remains. You have to take into consideration other things, the spirit of the nation, tradition of the nation.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: That was a question which was discussed already in the 16th century in France. What shall be done? From a strict point of view . . . There was a group called le politick, political men, and they (inaudible) and who look at it from a strictly practical point of view. What is better? Uniformity or toleration. And the answer which they get is roughly this. It depends. If you can have uniformity, if there is no powerful (inaudible) stamping out any dissent from the very beginning, but you see this is already so powerful that it would mean civil war than toleration. Now gradually the toleration issue is won over not only on this political ground but because some people were in favor of toleration. Without the union of these principal (inaudible) of toleration with the politicians, the whole thing would not have happened. We must not rewrite the issues of the past in the light of the situation that has come about in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

Student: I have a question referring to page 220, paragraph 3. It seems that what he should be saying is if those rights have not been acknowledged or where those rights have been acknowledged and not challenged.

Strauss: But challenged may not mean what you think it means. Demanded. That a sovereign cannot challenge has an older English meaning that I challenge everyone to . . . I do not know. Who is the best knower of old English in this class? Why not look it up in the Oxford dictionary?

On the same page in the fourth paragraph.

Reader: "Secondly, that those philosophers who said the world or the soul of the world was God face unworthily (inaudible) and deny his existence, for by God is understood the cause of the world, and to say the world is God is to say there is no cause of it."

Strauss: This passage Hobbes deleted in the Latin edition.

On page 440 we find the remark, the world is corporeal, that is to say, body. Also every part of the body is likewise body. Consequently every part of the universe is body, and that which is not body is no part of the universe. And because the universe is all, that which is no part of it is nothing. This is a theoretical observation, and from this it follows that God did part of the world or the world.

(The tape did not contain the last part of this lecture.)



Lecture XIV  
Seminar on Hobbes: February 19, 1964

Let us now turn, because we have a very long assignment, to De cive, 14, Leviathan, chapter 25 to (inaudible). Now this discussion of law and punishment and related things is from the end of the section on government in De cive, and does not form the end of the second part of the Leviathan. The reason for the different order in De cive is perhaps that the subject of laws and punishment is a kind of transition from government to religion.

Now the first point which Hobbes makes in the De cive is the distinction between law and council. Law is a command, and council is not a command. But there is much more behind this simple distinction. The Sermon on the Mount. What is the Sermon on the Mount, according to the Catholic and the Protestant interpretation? But the reformers deny the distinction. Hobbes takes the side of the Protestants. The Sermon on the Mount. Are they (inaudible), or are they duties for every Christian? Now the Catholic doctrine draws a distinction between councils and laws and the Protestants deny that.

Hobbes implies that there cannot be councils given by God because God has the power, but doesn't have the councils which he can command.

Let us read in the Leviathan, page 158, the fourth paragraph.

Reader: "Examples of the difference between Command and Counsell, we may take from the formes of Speech that expresse them in Holy Scripture. Have no other Gods but me; Makes to thy selfe no graven Image; Take not Gods name in vain; Sanctifie the Sabbath; Honour thy Parents; Kill not; Steale not, etc. are Commands; because the reason for which we are to obey them, is drawn from the will of God, our King, whom we are obliged to obey. But these words, Sell all thou hast; give it to the poore; and follow me, are Counsell; because the reason for which we are to do so, is drawn from our own benefit; which is this, that we shall have Treasure in heaven. These words, Go into the Village over against you . . . "

Strauss: This is a favorite passage because it shows the rights of sovereignty.

Reader: "And you shall find an Asse tyed, and her Colt; loose her, and bring her to me, are a Command; for the reason of their fact is drawn from the will of their Master: but these words, Repent, and be Baptized in the Name of Jesus, are Counsell; because the reason why we should so do, tendeth not to any benefit of God Almighty, who shall still be King in what manner soever we rebell; but of our selves, who have no other means of avoyding the punishment hanging over us for our sins."

Strauss: If someone would deny the originality of Hobbes as a political philosopher, he might get away with it, but he cannot possibly deny the originality of Hobbes as a biblical (inaudible).

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: I do not know whether Hobbes explicitly says whether God can give counsell, (inaudible).

The most interesting point at least from my point of view is what is said on pages 167-168 about the problem of rhetoric.

Reader: "But where a man may lawfully command as a father in a family or a leader in an army his exhortations and deportations are not only lawful but also necessary and laudable, but they are no more counsels, but commands, which when they are for execution and solemn labor sometimes necessity and always humanity requireth to be sweetened in (inaudible) by encouragement and priase of counsel, rather than in harsher language of command."

Strauss: So in other words there is a certain legitimate state for rhetoric, as Hobbes says. As he admits in that passage in De cive, chapter 12, paragraph (inaudible) which we discussed before, where he says logic is never severed from wisdom, and rhetoric almost always (and we now know what he means by almost always), unless it is used by lawful authority, for making the subject more obedient by appealing to (inaudible) rather than the harsh way.

At the end of this where he speaks of the politics of counsellors.

Reader: "Otherwise, because many eyes see the same thing in divers lines, and are apt to look asquint towards their private benefit; they that desire not to misse their marke, though they look about with two eyes, yet they never ayme but with one; And therefore no great Popular Common-wealth was ever kept up; but either by a forraign Enemy that united them; or by the reputation of some one eminent Man amongst them; or by the secret Counsell of a few; or by the mutuall feare of equall factions; and not by the open Consultations of the Assembly. And as for very little Common-wealths, be they Popular, or Monarchicall, there is no humane wisdom can uphold them, longer then the Jealousy lasteth of their potent Neighbours."

Strauss: In other words, the city in the classical sense can exist only by under very special considerations (inaudible), but this is not based on the nature of things. Needless to say, this was not an observation of Hobbes.

Let us continue. In the second paragraph of Chapter 14 of De cive, Hobbes discusses the Aristotelian definition of law, which is found in the Rhetoric. Law is not, as Aristotle asserts, a limited speech in accordance with the common agreement of a city, a speech indicating how one ought to do the particular

thing. Hobbes says that no common consent is required for law, and secondly, Hobbes does not like Aristotle's formula indicating a law must command, and a form of speech which enforces something which is not a law. What does Aristotle imply when he blurs the distinction between law and counsell? Is there not a human phenomenon which is not law nor counsell? And therefore partakes of both? (Inaudible . . . ). No radical distinction between law and custom because there is no radical distinction between law and morality. Hobbes is very much concerned with having such a very marked line.

For Hobbes even the unwritten law, the natural law, is presumed to be commanded by the sovereign; otherwise it wouldn't be law. Now let us come to the chapter on civil law in the Leviathan, Chapter 26. Let us read the beginning and the end of the first paragraph.

Reader: "By Civill Lawes, I understand the Lawes, that men are therefore bound to observe, because they are Members, not of this, or that Common-wealth in particular, but of a Common-wealth."

"My designe, being not to shew what is Law here, and there; but what is Law; as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and divers others have done, without taking upon them the profession of the study of the Law."

Strauss: I think that is very clear to all of you, that jurisprudence is something different from the study of law proper. But it is very interesting for Hobbes here; here Aristotle suddenly appears as a model, not alone, but in the company of Plato and Cicero, but still that only strengthens that. In other words, Hobbes knows this tradition -- Plato's, Aristotle's, Cicero's tradition. Not the tradition of the so-called Sophists. I think it is very important to realize that, that Hobbes is aware that the traditional philosophy is this. Now they were wrong. They defined, for example, law badly. But they raised the right kind of questions.

An interesting parallel to that we find in Chapter 14 of De cive, paragraph four.

Reader: "All law may be divided, first according to the diversity of its authors into divine and human. The divine, according to the two ways whereby God hath made known his will unto men, is two-fold, natural (or moral) and positive."

Strauss: Natural and moral is simply identical for Hobbes, but this is not an innovation of Hobbes alone, but by that time it was no longer (inaudible).

Reader: "Natural is that which God hath declared to all men by his eternal word born with them, to wit, their natural reason; and this is that law, which in this whole book I have endeavoured to unfold."

Strauss: That is a very important piece of information about De cive. This whole book or this whole middle book deals with natural law, and this is another link with Cicero.

Page 175 in the second paragraph.

Reader: "If the sovereign of one Common-wealth, subdue a People that have lived under other written Lawes, and afterwards govern them by the same Lawes, by which they were governed before; yet those Lawes are the Civill Lawes of the Victor, and not of the Vanquished Common-wealth."

Strauss: If one country is overrun by another, and the victor permits continuation of the old legal code, from now on the law is by virtue of the victor and not the old law.

Reader: "For the Legislator is he, not by whose authority the Lawes were first made, but by whose authority they now continue to be Lawes."

Strauss: Now. Now. The sovereign is the present sovereign; there are no past sovereigns.

Reader: "And therefore where there be divers Provinces, within the Dominion of a Common-wealth, and in those Provinces diversity of Lawes, which commonly are called the Customes of each severall Province, we are not to understand that such Customes have their force, onely from Length of Time; but that they were antiently Lawes written, or otherwise made known, for the Constitutions, and Statutes of their Sovereigns; and are now Lawes, not by vertue of the Praescription of time, but by the Constitutions of their present Sovereigns."

Strauss: Prescription does not make law. Prescription in itself has no binding force. There is no burden of the past which people have to accept.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: If there is any rule obeyed anywhere and no inequity appears in the use thereof, then how come that is so generally observed? That can only be due to intrinsic rationality.

Universality of the law of nature is (inaudible) observed in Hobbes, but it is no longer bound up with the nature of man as Cicero said; for Cicero man is by nature a social animal, for Hobbes not. One can say Hobbes derives at Cicero's result by starting from opposite premises. Cicero starts from man as a social animal, and shows then what is required for the perfection of this particular rational and social animal. Hobbes starts from self-preservation alone and derives (inaudible) moral virtues. When you compare Hobbes' enumeration of virtues with Cicero's

enumeration of virtues, you see they are very different. Courage, temperance, have (inaudible) stated in Hobbes' doctrine of morality. And they are very powerful in Cicero, to say nothing of the fact that when Cicero (inaudible) such things as physics, logic, and ethics are virtues and are necessary for the perfection of man as gratitude and some other things.

The law of nature is the dictator of reason. This has remained unchanged.

Regarding this prescription business, page 181.

Reader: "But because there is no Judge Subordinate, nor Sovereign, but may erre in a Judgement of Equity; if afterward in another like case he find it more consonant to Equity to give a contrary Sentence, he is obliged to doe it. No mans error becomes his own Law; nor obliges him to persist in it. Neither (for the same reason) becomes it a Law to other Judges, though sworn to follow it. For though a wrong Sentence given by authority of the Sovereign, if he know and allow it, in such Lawes as are mutable, be a constitution of a new Law, in cases, in which every little circumstance is the same; yet in Lawes immutable, such as are the Lawes of Nature, they are no Lawes to the same, or other Judges, in the like cases for ever after. Princes succeed one another; and one Judge passeth, another commeth; nay, Heaven and Earth shall passe; but not one title of the Law of Nature shall passe; for it is the Eternall Law of God. Therefore all the Sentences of precedent Judges that have ever been, cannot all together make a Law contrary to naturall Equity: Nor any examples of former Judges, can warrant an unreasonable Sentence, or discharge the present Judge of the trouble of studying what is Equity (in the case he is to Judge,) from the principles of his own naturall reason."

Strauss: Each judge has to reconsider the decision, and the fact that another judge made an inequitable decision before does not bind a certain judge. If it is a clear statement of the legislature against natural right, the judge has no choice. You know there is always a considerable leeway in applying the law and here the judge is under an obligation to assume out of respect for the sovereign, because he must presume that the sovereign is a respectable man. He must presume that he is a reasonable man, and from this comes the assumption to give an equitable interpretation of the law, and if the law by this formulation excludes any (inaudible), then it can't work.

Now he gives here an example in the sequel, where Hobbes shows a clear case of inequity of law. What is the key point?

Student: There was a law on the books saying that a person who flew from justice was presumed guilty. The idea is that there could be particular (inaudible) who wouldn't be guilty.

Strauss: In other words, the judge himself knew that he was innocent. That was the case. But he had to act on this legal

presumption.

This is a point which got its due in the early 19th century by (inaudible); you know, the concern with a reasonable penal law. Hobbes was concerned with that; no question about that. But the basis of this penal law in Hobbes is natural law. Natural law gives judges and legislators guidance as to what constitutes reasonable punishment. This side of Hobbes must not be neglected in any way. It implies natural law. There are some people who (inaudible) say that, but they drew the conclusion that nevertheless they didn't see any need for natural law anymore.

A purely biological remark regarding page 185 following when he speaks of divisions of law, and there he establishes a parallel between the divisions of the Roman law and English law. He tries to show that there is a parallel to each item of Roman law in English law.

I know only one other thing where the same thing occurs, and that is a writing (inaudible), 1620, which according to my hypothesis is the earliest writing of Hobbes, but it was published anonymously. I believe it would be of some interest, because Hobbes' first book was written when he was 50 or more, the Elements of Law, and such a very long youth is unequalled in the annals of the mind. This book is a kind of imitation of (inaudible). At that time I had the greatest authority on English law, Sir William Codesworth, and he didn't know anything of this kind from any other book.

Let us see on page 188, the second paragraph.

Reader: "I conclude therefore, that in all things not contrary to the Morall Law, (that is to say, to the Law of Nature,) all Subjects are bound to obey that for divine Law, which is declared to be so, by the Lawes of theCommon-wealth."

Strauss: In other words, the commonwealth decides which is the divine law.

Reader: "Which also is evident to any mans reason; for whatsoever is not against the Law of Nature, may be made Law in the name of them that have the Sovereign power; and there is no reason men should be the lesse obliged by it, when tis propounded in the name of God. Besides, there is no place . . . "

Strauss: This passage was omitted in the Latin version, because it was no longer fit at that time.

Reader: ". . . in the world where men are permitted to pretend other Commandements of God, than are declared for such by the Common-wealth. Christian states punish those that revolt from Christian Religion, and all other states, those that set up any Religion by them forbidden. For in whatsoever is not regulated by the Common-wealth, tis Equity (which is theLaw of Nature, and therefore an eternall Law of God) that every man equally enjoy his liberty."

Strauss: How do you interpret this last sentence? This is also omitted in the Latin. The preceding sentence merely says that in every society the sovereign decides what is the legal religion. At the beginning of it -- what does the for mean? The reason is this--only what is not commanded by the commonwealth, everyone may do what he wants. If the sovereign decides it, then you must obey it. So it would be a continuation of what we discussed last time. That the sovereign may, but is not compelled, to establish religion.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Think of the prohibition problem. Let us assume a law forbids drinking of alcoholic beverages -- a religious law; well, in Islam it does. And if the people are in the habit of drinking, then it is unenforceable. In Islam, what was done is simply this--that the wine-drinking Muslims looked very closely at the law and said that this word used in the Koran means only the beverage coming from grapes, and they took it very literally, but it would not forbid a beverage coming from any other alcoholic (inaudible). Otherwise there would have been the same situation that happened in the twenties. This is a very common thing, that a religion forbids things which are unenforceable, and a civil sovereign couldn't be expected by the (inaudible) religious people to enforce because of the drastic possibilities.

Think about the demands made by students about what chastity in marriage means. It is uncontrollable by the civil sovereign. It would be against all propriety that one of the spouses would accuse the other. So there are limits. The interesting cases are those which are discussed later when the sovereign commands something which is clearly counter to the religion. Then of course there is a conflict.

In the beginning of Chapter 27 he discusses the first commandment, because the first commandment is of course one of these cases which the observation of which cannot be observed, and the transgression of which cannot be punished by the human legislator.

Reader: "A Sinne, is not onely a Transgression of a Law, but also any Contempt of the Legislator. For such Contempt, is a breach of all his Lawes at once. And therefore may consist, not onely in the Commission of a Fact, or in the Speaking of Words by the Lawes forbidden, or in the Omission of what the Law commandeth, but also in the Intention, or purpose to transgresse. For the purpose to breake the Law, is some degree of Contempt in him, to whom it belongeth to see it executed."

Strauss: In other words, thought can be simpler. Words and speech, it goes without saying.

Reader: "To be delighted in the Imagination onely, of being possessed of another mans goods, servants, or wife, without any intention to take them from him by force, or fraud, is no breach of the Law, that sayth, Thou shalt not covet."

Strauss: In this case which he discusses with Bishop (inaudible).

Reader: "Nor is the pleasure a man may have in imagining, or dreaming of the death of him, from whose life he expecteth nothing but dammage, and displeasure, a Sinne; but the resolving to put some Act in execution, that tendeth thereto. For to be pleased in the fiction of that, which would please a man if it were reall, is a Passion so adhaerant to the Nature both of man, and every other living creature, as to make it a Sinne, were to make Sinne of being a man. The consideration of this, has mademe think them too severe, both to themselves, and others, that maintain, that the First motions of the mind, (though checked with the fear of God) be Sinnes. But I confesse it is safer to erre on that hand, than on the other."

Student: Is thought then sin?

Strauss: From Hobbes' point of view, no. The Hobbian argument would be this: actions and words can be sinful, because it is within the control of man, confronted with the gallows, to keep his mouth shut and to refrain from action. But no sight of gallows can control his (inaudible). That is Hobbes' assertion that man is not the master of his thought.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: If the intent can clearly be inferred from actions and words, as if the man said 'I am going to kill you', and he had said before, 'I will kill you,' then this would be a sign admitting in evidence his intention.

Student: The thing that I don't understand about this paragraph is that he completely ignores the New Testament teaching.

Strauss: I don't believe Hobbes ignores this.

Student: What would he decide (inaudible) ?

Strauss: He would simply say that man cannot fulfill the tenth commandment.

Student: The Bishops' reply was based on the New Testament?

Strauss: Of course. That is Hobbes' view. He discusses this question of the necessity ; this is a much broader issue; he is concerned with the question of unbelief. Can unbelief be a sin? Unbelief can be a sin if it depends on man's will. If the will somehow cooperates in belief. Hobbes denies that. There is no sphere in which the will can determine what we believe or do not believe.

The reference to determinism is not sufficient because Hobbes is simply too commonsensical as to deny that there are degrees of necessity. And when he says in a suitable paragraph 7 of the



first chapter of De cive, that when we are confronted with violence, with the danger of being killed, then we are favored with the same necessity with which a stone is carried downward. He doesn't say that if we see an attractive apple or candy, that we are driven to that with the same necessity because this desire we can suppress. But aversion from death according to Hobbes we cannot suppress. There are degrees of necessity, and to theoretically defend it he would probably say this because there are always a variety of stimuli and they may cancel each other out. But there are certain stimuli which are more powerful than any counter stimuli. It is determinism all the way around, but different stimuli have a different determining power. The highest power according to Hobbes is that skirted by death.

Words and speeches can be controlled, whereas digestion cannot be controlled. Hobbes says that in this respect belief has the same status as digestion. It cannot be controlled. Given certain data we must believe that and if the data are ambiguous or conflicting, then doubt. This is at least his assertion.

On page 194 we find another statement about the essential difference between man and brutes in the fourth paragraph.

Reader: "As for the Passions, of Hate, Lust, Ambition, and Covetousnesse, what Crimes they are apt to produce, is so obvious to every mans experience and understanding, as there needeth nothing to be said of them, saving that they are infirmities, so annexed to the nature, both of man, and all other living creatures, as that their effects cannot be hindred, but by extraordinary use of Reason, or a constant severity in punishing them."

Strauss: If you take this very literally, ambition also is annexed with the nature of all living creatures -- am ambitious dog, cat, ant, and so on, contrary to what Hobbes frequently says. But you see this is one of those many signs that on the one hand, pride, and peculiarly human things which make the government of humans so particularly difficult, and on the other hand his dislike to have a clearcut distinction between man and brute.

In the next page fear is in a sense good because it makes people law-abiding but fear can also be the cause of crime. Fear sometimes causes crime, as when the danger is neither present nor corporeal. If the danger is present and corporeal, fear cannot be the cause of crime. "For not every Fear justifies the Action it produceth, but the fear onely of corporeall hurt, which we call Bodily Fear, and from which a man cannot see how to be delivered, but by the action." Fear of corporeal hurt (inaudible); fear of fantastical hurt (inaudible); the corporeal is better than the fantastical. The corporeal is the solid and the defensible. The fantastical is the realm of vanity and (inaudible).

If someone kills a man because he has said something derogatory about him, this of course does not justify the killing, because it is only a fantastical hurt; man does not suffer any genuine

harm if someone says to him 'you idiot.' Only his vanity suffers, and of course for Hobbes the same is true of fear of spirit. What man does out of fear of spirit as Hobbes calls it is also not justified.

In De cive, in Chapter 14, paragraph 19, he discusses typically Hobbian things. The crime of atheism. Hobbes doesn't deny that's a crime, but what kind of crime?

Reader: "Many find fault that I have referred atheism to imprudence, and not to injustice."

Strauss: Imprudence has here the old meaning of a vice. Under which virtue or vice are the various crimes to be classified, and Hobbes says not under crimes against justice but under crimes against food. Food is understood as a virtue.

Reader: "Yea by some it is taken so, as if I had not declared myself an enemy bitter enough against atheists. They object further, that since I had elsewhere said that it might be known there is a God by natural reason, I ought to have acknowledged that they sin at least against the law of nature, and therefore are not only guilty of imprudence, but injustice too. But I am so much an enemy to atheists, that I have both diligently sought for, and vehemently desired to find some law whereby I might condemn them of injustice. But when I found none, I inquired next what name God himself did give to men so detested by him. Now God speaks thus of the atheist: The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. Wherefore I placed their sin in that rank which God himself refers to."

Strauss: Now a few words about Chapter 28. Let us look for one moment at the sequel. At the beginning of the chapter he defines punishment.

Reader: "A Punishment, is an Evil inflicted by publique Authority, on him that hath done, or omitted that which is Judged by the same Authority to be a Transgression of the Law; to the end that the will of men may thereby the better be disposed to obedience."

Strauss: Paragraph three.

Reader: "From the definition of Punishment . . . "

Strauss: And so on. He does the same thing here as in the chapter on law. First a definition of law; here, a definition of punishment. And then inferences from the definition. But the question is how did he get the definition? This follows the general rule of procedure. We have first analysis. And when we have concluded the analysis, we have arrived at the premises, and then we proceed deductively. We have the definition and then we infer from the definition the punishment. The inference and the criticism of opposite views give us the notion

of how Hobbes arrived at the definition. In other words, he found certain definitions in existence, and then he saw certain certainties and defects, and then he saw that punishment defined in this way clearly covers all cases. The ultimate reason is then, behind all such definitions, is naturally the beginning of the whole argument, the state of nature, and this whole thing. I suppose one could show in each case that the definition of punishment or civil law as Hobbes gives it is fully justified only if man's nature is what Hobbes says it is. Here in the case of Hobbes the (inaudible) is very simple, but if you take a work of a contemporary of Hobbes, like Spinoza's Ethics, which begins with definitions and no one knows where they come from. and it is fairly easy to see that if you accept these definitions, all traditional views are untenable. But then the question arises, but with what right can he make this definition which no one would grant. Here it is very simple because Hobbes in a way proves the definition by the inference. By showing well, look, are these inferences not sound, and do I not cover the whole ground adequately by starting with these definitions? The definition is not arbitrary, of course, what Hobbes' doctrine of definition may sound to be. He claims that it covers exactly what man reasonably means everywhere by passion.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: You have simply to think, which cases of punishment are not covered by that, and which cases does it cover which are legitimately to be called punishment? In the case of Spinoza, it is a much more complicated question because one has to consider the whole book. The study of a single chapter is sufficient to see whether Hobbes is right or wrong.

Student: I had a question about the footnote on atheism. He seems to say that he received his criticism both for putting atheism (inaudible) and then he says I have demonstrated elsewhere that God can be found by natural reason. What is he referring to -- a previous work?

Strauss: "Since I had elsewhere said that it might be known there is a God by natural reason" -- this I believe refers to Chapter 2, paragraph 21. This is not necessarily an proof of God's existence, but merely an admission on Hobbes' part that it can be demonstrated. See also the next page in the same paragraph where he says "But as for the record I have said that God's existence can be known by natural reason." This is not a demonstration.

Student: What I am referring to, at least as how it is in English, he says "Many find fault with my statement" and then "They object further that if I had elsewhere said that God may be known by natural reason." Who is this 'they'?

Strauss: How can I know? One cannot exclude the possibility that they don't exist, and that Hobbes simply answers to his

imaginary opponents. In the Latin you have the episto-dedicatory which if I remember well was an edition only of the second edition. 1647 or 1649. Then I have in this edition a letter by (inaudible) to (inaudible). Pierre (inaudible) was the renovator of the Korean doctrine; Samuel Sorbierre somehow belonged to this group in Paris, and he was the translator of Hobbes' De cive in the French. And then there is also a (inaudible) letter, also as a kind of recommendation of De cive. The notes were additions to the second edition, so that theoretically any reader of the first edition printed or in manuscript could have made this note.

One or two more passages -- on page 202, the second paragraph of Chapter 28.

Reader: "Before I inferre any thing from this definition, there is a question to be answered, of much importance; which is, by what door the Right, or Authority of Punishing in any case, came in. For by that which has been said before, no man is supposed bound by Covenant, not to resist violence; and consequently it cannot be intended, that he gave any right to another to lay violent hands upon his person. In the making of a Common-wealth, every man giveth away the right of defending another; but not of defending himselfe. Also he obligeth himselfe, to assist him that hath the Sovereignty, in the Punishing of another; but of himselfe not. But to covenant to assist the Sovereign, in doing hurt to another, unlesse he that so covenanteth have a right to doe it himselfe, is not to give him a Right to Punish. It is manifest therefore that the Right which the Common-wealth (that is, he, or they that represent it) hath to Punish, is not grounded on any concession, or gift of the Subjects. But I have also shewed formerly, that before the Institution of Common-wealth, every man had a right to every thing, and to do whatsoever he thought necessary to his own preservation; subduing, hurting, or killing any man in order thereunto. And this is the foundation of that right of Punishing, which is exercised in every Common-wealth."

Strauss: Does any one of you know how Locke settles that issue? Where does the right of punishing come from? By what door did the right of punishing come in? How does the commonwealth acquire the right of punishing, according to Hobbes?

The right of punishment by nature belongs to the individual. So the right to punishment which is possessed by the government is derivative from a natural right to punish which the individual has from nature. If one generalizes that, all rights of the commonwealth are derivative from rights of the individual. The commonwealth, the community, has no right which is not derivative from the right of the individual. Contrary to the traditional view, according to which there are rights of the commonwealth which are derived purely from the fact that the commonwealth alone is concerned with the common good and therefore cannot be exercised by the individual as individual. The common good is the private good. In the case of Locke, an attempt to understand the common good in terms of the individual, (inaudible), which plays such a great role in present-day

political thought where it is hard to maintain the integrity of the political over against the private.

Now the case of Hobbes is different; Hobbes of course would also not recognize any rights of the commonwealth which are not ultimately derivative from the rights of the individual. But still, he calculatigly rejects in advance Locke's explanation. Every man has a right to everything. The right of everyone is the foundation of that right of punishing which is exercised in every commonwealth. To that extent, he agrees with Locke, but he differs from him. The subject did not give the sovereign that right. According to Locke, the subject did give the sovereign the right to punish, which is of the law of nature. So in other words, Hobbes in a way recognizes more clearly than Locke the impossibility to derive right of the commonwealth from that of the individual. But there is no fundamental difference; it is only a very subtle one.

The last point, which is of purely psychological interest, is when he speaks of the various kinds of punishment. I found it very revealing what he said about exiles. On page 207.

Reader: "For if a man banished, be neverthelesse permitted to enjoy his Goods, and the Revenue of his Lands, the meer change of ayr is no Punishment."

Strauss: So we leave it at that.

Lecture XV  
Seminar on Hobbes: February 22, 1964

(The beginning of this lecture was inaudible on the tape.)

Student: How can the king treat the people as enemies if they do not have the natural right to distinguish between whether he is treating them as enemies or not?

Strauss: Let me say this--if there is an innocent man, and the judge says he should be arrested and perhaps even killed, he surely treats him as an enemy. He is not a guilty man under the law. But the more elementary point is this. According to Hobbes, the individual preserves the right to self-defense even if he is guilty. Within this right it is of course possible that some men will commit a crime which is not possible, and then natural law details that you be punished if he is guilty after his guilt has been established by a competent judge. But if there is any arbitrariness there, then the question will arise whether the individual should abide by that, and then the question arises does the king by disregarding this law not in fact treat him as an enemy? If he is an enemy, he also has the rights of an enemy.

There is another legal question, (inaudible), why the judge must have a considerable legal discretion is this. It would seem to be entirely in the spirit of Hobbes' doctrine of sovereignty that the judge simply must apply the positive law according to the later formula that the judge is a mouth which pronounces the word of the law, i.e., the law is (inaudible), and the judge simply subsumes the present case under that general law, and that's all he has to do. That is not Hobbes' view, and the reason is this. Because there is no necessity whatever that the sovereign in making laws might not contradict himself. He may lay down law #1 and then make law #2 without being aware that there is a certain area in which they conflict. Here the judge has by the nature of the case discretion. He must go beyond that and must try to clarify this contradiction, and then Hobbes says in the use of this judicious discretion he has no sufficient guide by any positive law in deciding what must be equitable.

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: The Enlightenment is not simply a more consistent (inaudible). I remember that from my childhood, (inaudible), and then there was a big revolution especially among Protestant theologians who denied that the Enlightenment was a simple consequence of the Reformation, but implied a break. The difficulty was only this -- that toleration was not a principle of the reformists as such. In the Enlightenment it became generally accepted on rationalistic principles. And now one wanted to preserve toleration and restore the teaching of (inaudible), which was not tolerationist.

But to come back to the point--I think there can be no question

that men like Galileo, Descartes, and so on, whatever their private belief may be, their work, what they did, cannot be directly said to be due to a Christian reformation. It cannot be done. The interesting thing is that in the moment when this simple Hegelian schema was exploded in a different version, it became the core in Max Weber's doctrine who traced the capitalist spirit to puritanism. I believe that is also not tenable although it is one of the most powerful doctrines today.

Now let us turn to MacPherson's book. The discussion of the (inaudible) follows of course a discussion of Hobbes' in MacPherson's book, and we have therefore to raise the question whether there is and what these two subjects have in common.

Now the remark occurs at the end of this chapter on page 158, in the second paragraph. "The (inaudible) could not entertain the idea of freedom as a concomitant of social living in an unacquisitive society." Although he does not refer here to Hobbes, he means that. Hobbes was as unable to do that as was the (inaudible). Hobbes could conceive of society only in terms of an acquisitive society. The same is true of Plato. But this is only an assertion.

Now both Hobbes and the Levellers dreamed up the idea of freedom with labor as a commodity like any other. Now how is this possible? I start from a more elementary level than MacPherson starts. How is agreement between Hobbes and the Levellers possible, given the fact that Hobbes was not a believer and the Puritans were believing Christians. MacPherson doesn't even raise the question, but it should be mentioned at least. What would MacPherson's reply be to that? There is an important agreement between Hobbes and the Puritans, and yet Hobbes was an unbeliever and the Puritans were believers. How is this possible? After all, these are not neutral questions like the question concerning the components of some chemicals.

What would Hobbes say about Overton's suggestion? He would say that in Overton there is a militant naturalism and it (inaudible) waived hostility to dogmatic religion. So, in other words, the story that the Puritans (inaudible) very big space in which all kinds of things are assembled from very pious people on the one hand and people who were only politically opposed to the whole English order on a perfectly natural ground, and therefore there could very well be an agreement.

When MacPherson says on page 141 . . .

Reader: "Overton repeated the first part in his appeal, where it was responded (inaudible), that no man can hand over more power than he has, and that no man by nature may abuse, torment, or afflict himself."

Strauss: Do you see a difference? May. In other words, man is forbidden to do that. In Hobbes, there would be no prohibition. In other words, the big thing for prohibition against suicide and those kind of things for Hobbes wouldn't make sense. Also when he says in this long quotation, "It is a firm law," and the next sentence, "therefore from hence is conveyed . . . "

Reader: ". . . to all men in general and to every man in particular an undoubted principle of reason by all rational and just way and means possible (inaudible) and deliver himself from all oppression, violence, and cruelty whatsoever."

Strauss: What is the difference between Overton and Hobbes then? The qualification. Hobbes says by any means, by hook and by crook. Overton uses this more traditionally, all just and rational means. Read the comment of MacPherson in the next paragraph.

Reader: "One is struck by the Hobbian tone of Overton's postulate as much as by the Lockian argument that is built on it. Fear in Hobbes' right of nature is deduced from the instinctive needs to defend oneself from everything harmful or destructive. And this right becomes an undoubted principle of reason and a part of the law of nature created created (inaudible) to one's own safety and being."

Strauss: So he sees a certain kinship but he does not reflect on the subtle differences between them. This is only in passing.

But what is the problem of the Levellers according to MacPherson? In principle they are forced to admit (inaudible) and in fact they deny (inaudible). This is the difficulty. It is quite true it is not as simple as MacPherson. The evidence which he gives is not clear enough to make sure that there is not (inaudible) in fact. Stating it from the opposite angle, if they excluded beggars and servants, they also excluded political enemies. This is a very very important point.

But let us grant him the main point--that the Levellers excluded beggars and servants; how did the Levellers claim that and justify that seeming contradiction? Let us look at the evidence--page 113, note 2.

Reader: "Cromwell says, 'an inhabitant upon a (inaudible) for one year, two years, or twenty years cannot be thought to have a fixed or permanent interest.'"

Strauss: So in other words, what makes a man a citizen, a full citizen, is not the fact that he is a human being. He must also have a fixed or permanent interest. And the proof is very simple, because otherwise every man coming to England, being a human being or being a Christian, would by this very fact acquire citizenship in England. This is truly absurd. He can be an English citizen only if he has permanent (inaudible) in England.



Now the next question is, is everyone who and whose family has ever lived in England, can he presume to have a permanent interest in England? And Cromwell said no. And the Levellers say, well, you don't have to be so strict, but something like that they admit. We must find what their specific definition is. Let us turn to page 123, the passage at the top.

Reader: "Cromwell: If we should go about to alter these things I do not think that we are bound to fight for every particular proposition. Servants while servants are not included. Then you agree that these who receive alms are to be included. I suppose it is concluded by all that the choosing of representatives is a privilege. Now I see no reason by any man ought to be excluded from that privilege, unless by voluntary servitude. I can see the reason why we would exclude the (inaudible) or servants or those that take on because they depend upon the will of other men, (inaudible), for servants and apprentices they are included in their masters and so for those that receive alms from door to door."

Strauss: What do we learn from this? Here a reason is given. It is not very elaborate, but I think we can see it. Choosing a representative is a privilege, which could be thought to mean it is not a right; it is a privilege. But since every native as native has his privilege and what is that? What excludes a man from full citizen rights? According to this doctrine of the Levellers?

Student: Voluntary servitude.

Strauss: But why is that? What would voluntary servitude in itself mean? I mean disregarding the context entirely, and if you would read something like this in Aristotle, for example.

Student: That that individual (inaudible) his own man. (Inaudible).

Strauss: And should be afraid to displease them. In other words the passive premise is that there is no secret ballot. Therefore of course if they vote against the desire of their masters, they would be fired. They are dependent people.

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: That is another implication here. In other words, masters and slaves have the same interest, just as it would be unfair to give the women the vote. And this was a point which he mentions; that there was no question of the women's vote. Therefore, one could rightly say the women are excluded because they are--their vote is implied in their husband's vote, the same would be true of other members of the household. So in other words, there is no necessity for having the course to a certain doctrine of labor as a mere commodity. I mean we do not have to go into the doctrine of bourgeois society in order

to explain the position taken by the Levellers.

Student: Do the Levellers also find wage-earners as subservient to their employers?

Strauss: Here we have it straight from the horse's mouth; in other words, not statements from modern economic historians, but by these people and they spoke as they do about the premises about servants. The servants might be inservants or outservants; inservants are domestic servants, and outservants go to live in their hut elsewhere.

Let us continue the other evidence--page 126 in the second paragraph, the statement of Cromwell.

Reader: "Arguing that the Leveller franchise proposes must end in anarchy refers to men who have no interest but the interests of breathing."

Strauss: And that is not enough, because they would breathe also under a foreign conqueror. In other words, for full citizenship there is required a political interest, i.e., an interest among other things in the political independence in the country. Now who has such an interest? A man who knows that he will be worse off in the case of foreign conquerors, but those who know or have no reason to assuming that they will be worse off when the foreign conqueror comes to them, why should they worry? Now if a man has an interest only in breathing, and assuming that the foreign conqueror is not an (inaudible) but a nice man like a French king, why should we worry about it? That is the point. These are political reasons which are of importance at all times and only the victory of democracy has made us oblivious of this type of reasoning.

Now next page in the third paragraph--the Leveller replies.

Reader: "(Inaudible) that the rights of property were established by divine law or by natural law, and B, that against every Englishman a vote on the contrary was the only means to preserve all property, since every man is naturally free and all must therefore have agreed to come to some form of government that they might preserve property. (Inaudible) must be presumed to have excluded here as he did earlier and was to do later in the (inaudible) those that had lost their birth-right or had come to depend upon the will of other men. They were no longer free and would have no necessary interest in preserving property."

Strauss: This may be true or not. That was one of the passages that you felt uncomfortable. So do I. But I am willing to grant that this reasoning is defensible. So this much about the explicit explanations here first.

Now what is MacPherson's criticism? Let us turn to page 146, paragraph two.

Reader: "It will be recalled that (inaudible) had excluded two grounds in the exclusion of servants and alms-takers. First, that they were dependent on the other will of men and would be afraid to displease them; and second, that they were included in their (inaudible). The first ground might of course be considered merely a realistic explanation of the probability of intimidation in a system of open voting. That servants and alms-takers upon being given the franchise would be afraid of displeasing those on whom they were dependent (inaudible . . . ). Whether the Levellers would have excluded half the men in England on such an expedient ground had they seen any conflict in principle would equal natural right is very doubtful. But in our view the question does not arise but they saw no conflict in principle. Since servants and alms-takers had already forfeited their birth-right, the wrongful relation of fear was transmuted into a just relation of dependent. The just relation is expressed in the notion of (inaudible). In the case of servants at least, the forfeiture of the birthright is tantamount to inclusion (inaudible), for the forfeiture of birthright goes with the alienation of the right of one's labor, and that alienation is not an abandonment, but a transfer of right to the master. The servants' labor is henceforth included in the master's labor, accordingly in the respect of the right to avoid an election."

Strauss: What do we say to that irony? The key point is of course the status of the considerations to expediency. Can one disregard considerations of expediency in such discussions? That is the question. And there is surely a school of thought which says there is something dirty which we shouldn't touch with a ten foot pole. But if you think about it, what is the ultimate conclusion of the considerations of a democratic theory which absolutely disregards considerations of expediency. We have seen it in our lifetime. I mean I am not thinking of the terrible things in Germany, because one could rightly say this was not the consequence of democratic theory, but it is a simple point.

If you want to be strict--one man, one vote--each vote counts as much as any other. You must of course have equal districts, congressional districts. No gerry mandering of any kind; that's clear. That is clear, and this is in a way recognized now, as we know, but this is enough. After all, how an election will go depends a bit on nominations, and the same democracy which would apply to elections applies to nominations. Some efforts in this respect are surely made in this country. But are they enough? You have these two big machines, the Republican and the Democratic machines, but there are people who are neither republicans nor democrats, and who are not even satisfied by the

fact that they will choose the lesser evil in a given situation. Strictly speaking, there must be proportional representation. That is what the logic of democracy requires. All right, let us take proportional representation, and the consequence in itself against logic is empathic; it depends entirely on how individuals think the electorate will vote. And you have to disregard the fact that we have this tradition of two parties in this country. One can of course say that it is tradition, and not following from the logic of the equal right of (inaudible) by no means. Then you have a nice situation in which government may absolutely become impossible. In this case you then have to come down to the fact that democracy is a form of government, and this consideration of expediency, call it that, must limit the logic of democracy. Sooner or later you have to limit it if you want to have government, and the Levellers, as it was said, we limit it rather earlier than some other people do, and we have to see what the grounds were, whether the grounds were not given to circumstances sound. A question which he doesn't raise -- the simple distinction between rights, sacred rights, and low expediency, and one of course could very well raise the question of how can a man like Overton, to take an extreme case, and a man who is very close to Hobbes in his way of thinking, speak of sacred rights.

Now this difficulty lives on up to the present day. I have not seen a hundred social scientists, who regard any value as good as any other value, who do not regard freedom of speech as in the first amendment as a sacred right. (The tape was changed at this point.) . . . and cannot be abridged under any circumstances except the clear and present danger as defined by (inaudible). In other words, this is the fundamental theoretical (inaudible) of MacPherson, that he uses this distinction between right and expediency without going into the necessity of government. Democracy is not merely equality of rights, but is the idea that equality of rights should be the basis of a government, i.e., of a working government, and if the working of government is in conflict with the full equality, then the question is everyone must then make a choice, because those who reject expediency truly contradict themselves. They say two things, equality to vote plus workable government.

Let us turn to another remark of his, when he discusses Edward Bernstein, on page 295 in note g. We note the exclusion of wage-earners. You know Edward Bernstein is a German social democrat of the late 19th century and of course spoke of wage-earners and not of servants.

Reader: "We note the exclusion of wage-earners and alms-takers in the second and third agreement, and reconciled it with his reading of (inaudible) principles by saying that journeyman were usually in the transition stage between apprentice and master, and that to extend the suffrage to agricultural laborers would, in the then circumstances, have strengthened the reactionary cause."

Strauss: Sure. Let's go on.

Reader: "Where both these grounds must be allowed somewhere . . . "

Strauss: Of course they must be, because if you exclude those who are anti-democratic from the vote, then you can also surely exclude those who at least can be presumed to be anti-democratic, namely the tenant of the nobility and so on who would of course, or let me say differently, who fought on the anti-democratic side. The point which Marx, who was much wiser than MacPherson, always made, was up to a certain point the majority was of course anti-democratic because the people who fought were of course dependent on the nobility, and only when the peasantry became numerically equal, more or less, to the factory worker, was there a ghost of a chance. I see this all the time; but MacPherson, who is much more doctrinaire in these matters, doesn't see that.

Now MacPherson develops his point on page 144.

Reader: "Economic right, like civil right, had to be claimed for everyone who in order to be assured to anyone. The political right in choosing representatives was different."

Strauss: And then he gives the reason . . . "The primary function of government was to secure precisely that property . . . "

Reader: "As is to make and enforce the rules within which men could make the most of their own energies."

Strauss: But here I wrote in the margin--where? Where do the Levellers speak in this language. This is a mere hypothetical abstraction which may or may not do, but he surely does not present any evidence.

A bit later on page 148.

Reader: "For Cromwell and Iverson only property in freehold land or chartered trading rights may demand free. For the Levellers, property of his own making may demand free."

Strauss: Where do they say that? I think the only evidence I found was a remark quoted on page 142 in the same paragraph.

Reader: "Everyone as he sees himself so he has himself propriety or else he could not see himself."

Strauss: That is the quotation -- now the explanation.

Reader: "What makes a man human is freedom from other men. Man's essence is freedom. Freedom is proprietorship of one's own person."

Strauss: So you see there is a sudden shift from something which they say to something which they do no longer say.

The right of this interpretation depends explicitly on whether the reason given by the Levellers for the restriction of mens' suffrage are not a sufficient explanation. In other words, whether this consideration that people who are dependent in their daily life on employers can be trusted with the political freedom. As it was stated one hundred years later by Rousseau, he took it for granted that the mass of the population might sell liberty for bread. Can you trust those people with liberty? In our age such crude words like bread wouldn't be used, but they call it now security. It is fundamentally the same problem. One cannot blame a poor man if he says, I don't care for freedom, I want bread. But on the other hand, those who are concerned with freedom can then also say they shouldn't vote, shouldn't have the right to vote. That I think was the issue. This is surely a political (inaudible), whether we have democracy (inaudible) in one way.

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: But this is a very theoretical statement, man's essence is freedom. Everyone would have said up to this time, at least those who had anything to do with the philosophic tradition in the wisest sense of the word, including Hobbes and Descartes, would have said man's essence is rationality. The first man of whom I know who said man's essence is freedom was Rousseau. He did this on the basis of a debunking of reason. This reason maintains its own status. The essence did not shift to freedom in this way. After Rousseau and German idealism, Marx included, then men's essence became daily bread.

There is another remark where he makes this clear on page 151 but we will concern ourselves with what we said before, namely property in one's labor was both a human attribute, a part of human personality, and an alienable commodity. Now those who alienated this commodity were no longer fully human. They could no longer claim that right which those could claim who were not alienated, i.e., those who were not wage earners.

I brushed up on some things. Milton--The ready and easy way to establish a free common-wealth--that was written in 1559, at the last minute before the king came back. Milton belongs much more of course to Cromwell than to the Levellers. The last word is quite revealing, among other things. "But I trust I shall have spoken persuasion to abundance of sensible and ingenious men; (inaudible . . . . .) , to assert this torrent also of the people, not to be so impetuous, but to keep their due charity, and the claim to recovering and uniting their better resolutions now that they already fear how open and unbounded the insolence and rages of our common enemy. Today these ruinous proceedings justly and timely (inaudible) to what a precedent of destruction, the deluge of the epidemic madness during the general defection of a misguided and abused multitude."

with which they utilize their own profit."

Strauss: In other words, that makes it perfectly clear. Possessive individualism is simply synonymous for bourgeois. I suppose the reason is the one which he gives. The term 'bourgeois' because of its infinite use has become loose and vague so that he prefers this other term.

I remind you also of what he said on page 158--the idea of freedom as a concomitant of social living in an unacquisitive society. This is the definition of the non-bourgeois society which he takes. Page 158--"The Levellers could not entertain the idea of freedom as the concomitant of social living in an unacquisitive society." In plain English--public means of production, no acquisitiveness, and then social living, everyone a member of this society of producers and consumers, and freedom of the concomitant of that. In other words, there is no earthly reason why there should be any interference with freedom. That's a marxist notion, surely a very mild marxist.

Now here regarding Harrington on page 162 he gives a quotation from Harrington which we must consider briefly.

Reader: "Such (inaudible) in the city that has little or no land and has revenue in trade, as is the proportion or balance of dominion or property in land. Such is the nature of the empire. If one man be so landlord of the territory or overbalance the people, for example, three parts to four, his empire is absolute monarchy. If a few or a nobility or a nobility with the clergy be landlord or overbalance the people to the like proportion, it makes (inaudible . . . ). And if the whole people be landlord, or hold the land so divided among them that no one man or men in the confidence of the or aristocracy overbalance them, the empire, without the interposition of force, is a commonwealth."

Strauss: So Harrington has frequently been used as the precursor of Marx--economic determinant--and regardless of the remarks which can properly describe economic determinant--but is (inaudible) economic determinant? I would say no.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Exactly. That is the old Aristotelian thing that for a regime to be stable, those who are members of the regime must be in possession of the required property. This is only a restatement of Aristotle's view. Here he says empire without the interposition of force; the economic determinant does not work automatically. The property balance may be favorable to oligarchy, and then we can simply use force and prevent that mechanism, by killing and confiscating and all these other simple political means.

Harrington approaches the problem from a different way -- 'I want freedom' -- and then what are the conditions? Answer: there must be a certain distribution of property, and in his view the distribution of property as it has come about in England in the last fifty years, say from 1550 to 1650, the decay of nobility and so on, this made it possible for the first time to have a commonwealth, i.e., a republic, in England. That was his point.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: Well, this is very simple. The term bourgeois, which was a French legal term for a certain part of the population. Men are full members of a borough. But then it took on a very definite meaning in Rousseau, because Rousseau had seen that the term 'citizen' is used by French writers about French people. They were subjects, just as the British were until just a few years ago. Subjects of the king; not citizens. A citizen is a man who participates in government. Either directly or indirectly--that's another matter. Thereupon Rousseau said, we must make a distinction between a citizen and a bourgeois, and a citizen is a man who participates in government, the old notion, and a bourgeois is someone who is a resident of a town and may have some privileges, by royal grant or so, but he has no inherent right of his own of participation in government.

Now this was taken over by Hegel, and Hegel made an additional remark which I think is helpful, and Hegel said the bourgeois is defined by fear of violent death. Now this sounds very abstract but it has a very neat meaning. Not only do they not participate in government; they don't fight. These armies of the regime were mercenary armies. The citizen is a man who does two things. He participates in government and he fights. Within these limits it is perfectly clear to understand. Classical republics, the republics of Italy for that matter, they were citizens; they participated in government. The subjects of the absolute monarchy did not participate in government and did not fight.

And then there came a man called Marx who had studied Hegel quite well and he made this point, which is an important corrective. He drops then this old story of participation in government and fighting, because after the French Revolution as you know they participated in government, they voted, and they were conscripted. He kept as it were the Nazi meaning of bourgeois and only interpreted it differently, namely in understanding bourgeois is not in contradistinction to subjects, as Rousseau and Hegel meant, but in contradistinction to their opposition within the new republic, because from Marx and Hegel's point of view the constitutions and monarchies would be also republics. These are of course the workers, or as Marx calls them, the proletariat. Here bourgeois is redefined in opposition to the worker, and he is no longer then the man who is characterized by fear of violent death, but by being the entrepreneurial child in this new society.



The Hegelian definition of the bourgeois is of interest also because it shows the historical continuity on a deeper level. Hegel says as it were Hobbes' definition of man, fear of violent death, is in fact only the definition of the bourgeois. Hegel doesn't say it but that is implied. The Hegelian doctrine of man and of human society is a doctrine of the bourgeois and the bourgeois society as our friend MacPherson says.

Now to return to Harrington. As we have seen, he is not an economic determinist. Page 166, the third paragraph.

Reader: "He follows Machiavelli in using gentry as as synonymous with nobility, those who have land, castles, and treasures, whereby the rest are wrought to dependence on them. When he corrects Machiavelli by saying that the nobility or gentry is destructive of popular government only if it has an overblanace of property."

Strauss: On the next page, also on Machiavelli, the third paragraph.

Reader: "But a nobility which holds an underbalance to the people is not only safe but necessary to the natural mixture of a well ordered commonwealth. Nobility being here defined again after Machiavelli though now more broadly as such that live upon their own revenue without engagement either to the tilling of their land or to other work for their livelihood."

Strauss: This is a quote from Machiavelli, Discourses 155. So you see that is historically not unimportant, that Harrington, a bourgeois theoretician according to MacPherson, has something very important that he has taken over from Machiavelli. Now Machiavelli thought, and this is in the main correctly understood by Harrington, what Machiavelli says in the (inaudible) chapter that you cannot have equality. Well, Machiavelli does not mean by equality what a radical democrat means today -- a general notion of equality where everyone has to go down. You cannot have this if you have a feudal nobility. That is incompatible, but you can have a kind of slave and nobility as you have it in Venice. He gives this example where there are people who are called gentlemen, but they are not feudal nobles; they are simply rich merchants. That's all right. So you can have a republic; you must have one-- that is the same thought in Harrington; you must have an upper class, an educated upper class which can govern. There is agreement that what Harrington adds is only a somewhat stronger emphasis on the property basis of a republic. There must be a certain kind of distribution of property without it being (inaudible).

By the way, if one wants to speak about capitalism in connection with this tradition, there is something in Machiavelli's teachings which prepares this. I have put all the evidence together in (inaudible) Machiavelli, page 249. There is one statement which is very clear, I think in the second chapter, where it is natural for man to acquire absolute power. Therefore the question is not should one acquire or should one not, but how, and the

answer is that one should not acquire only justice moderately, but efficiently or inefficiently. So acquisitiveness is as such all right, but we must go about it in a way redundant to your own benefit.

And then there are other discussions, for example when he speaks of the Roman nobility, that they gave in fairly easily, that it was a matter of honor and political position, but then it became a matter of property, and there are various other remarks of this kind, but this was not yet elaborated by Machiavelli.

There is some more on page 181 -- Harrington's love of commonwealth for intrigue came indeed from the ancient word. Now commonwealth for intrigue--that's also a Machiavellian notion. Namely, commonwealth can be for preservation only, as for example in Sparta, and it can be for intrigue, and this was taken over by Bacon and he added the important point (inaudible), and this is not at all in Machiavelli; Bacon came from a different country. In other words, this became part--that we usually forget-- what we call the liberal democratic tradition -- part of it is this tough line, Machiavelli, Bacon, Harrington, and a trace of it had even been found in Locke. I remember his reasoning in favor of the majority role -- why the majority role is to be followed? Played a force. In other words, these men were not so squeamish about the distinction between right and expediency. Their notion of a right which does not agree with expediency is ludicrous. One cannot understand the history of democracy if one forgets these tough ingredients of it.

The key question for MacPherson is Harrington's notion of the place of the gentry. He says it on page 174 at the end of the paragraph. Only the joint rule of the people and the gentry would work. Naturally, because the people could not govern properly. They need an upper class, but an upper class which is favorable to the people, and this would not be the nobility, but the gentry.

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: But that is exactly the point. Namely, a feudal nobility is fatal to equality, to freedom. A so-called nobility like the Venetians, which means really a rich merchant class which is not only compatible but desirable. And then one would have to prove that this was already a bourgeois theory. In purely political considerations, that's (inaudible) that a landed feudal nobility is incompatible with a free commonwealth because it was still assumed that the seat of political freedom would be city and not the land. But tribes could be free, but no one wanted to return to tribalism. They wanted to have a combination of freedom with (inaudible) and the answer to that question was how can you have that, and it was a certain kind of upper class. A trading one preferable to a military one.

Now as for Harrington's bourgeois thinking, on page 175, toward the end of the page -- 'the gentry are sufficiently bourgeois to

administer an entrepreneurial society acceptably to the entrepreneurs.'

Page 179--there is a difficulty. Begin at the bottom of page 178.

Reader: "Equally revealing in Harrington's view of the place of the landowner in capitalist society is his treatment of the advantages to be gained by military (inaudible). He subsumes under one general theory of appropriation the labor of the entrepreneur and the labor of the armed nobility and gentry conquering land and people for their private gain. In Harrington's labor justification of property, the labor that gives title to property is is indifferently (inaudible). This donation, (inaudible . . . ) quoting the Psalms and Genesis comes from a kind of (inaudible) for industry, from the different kinds and successes of this industry, whether in arms or in other exercises of the mind or body, derives the natural equity of dominion or property. Oceana is the (inaudible), the commonwealth for (inaudible), the trade for a commonwealth for increase in arms; arms are not borne by merchants but by noblemen."

Strauss: You see how much he takes that for granted. That the merchants, the bourgeois', fear of violent death.

Reader: "The nobility therefore, having these arms in their hands, by such provinces are to be acquired, new provinces yield new estates. So whereas the merchant has his return in silks or canvas, the soldier will have his return in land. If the commonwealth attains the five new provinces, and such commonwealth will have provinces, it is certain that besides honors, magistracies, revenues, there will be more (inaudible) in the nobility of Oceana of 14,000 pounds land a year than ever were or otherwise be."

Strauss: Now at the bottom of this page.

Reader: "The trade of the nobility and gentry is arms; the labor by which they entangle themselves to God's donation for their share is the labor of arms."

Strauss: This is the question of how far we can preface whether he interprets the military professional in economic terms. It sounds economic enough, but this is a kind of metaphorical (inaudible), which I do not know.

By the way, it is quite striking that here Harrington differs considerably from Hobbes. Hobbes didn't wish to put such an emphasis on imperalism as Harrington did; only if the land is really too small for the people, then they should go out, should colonize, but only as a thing of last resort.

There is another passage which we should consider, on page 190, the second paragraph.

Reader: "Harrington's unawareness of any inconsistency in his use of the principle of the (inaudible) is understandable. If he was thinking of the present gentlemen and the proposed commonwealth as essentially bourgeois. And the evidence we examined earlier suggests that that was how he thought. But to state this is still to accuse Harrington of contradictions, for the principle of the (inaudible) asserted as universal turns to operate only down to the time the bourgeois commonwealth is established, when it is cancelled by that very step. In the past the balance had worked in every direction. As it moved, it brought down monarchy, oligarchy, and commonwealth. But as soon as it is brought into being it ceases to operate. Overbalance of land for the bourgeois few would not lead to overbalance (inaudible). If Harrington's commonwealth were established, (inaudible . . . )"

Strauss: That is Marx' criticism of Hegel. Does Harrington not think about the question of how to preserve the balance in spite of the fact that great inequalities are bound to arise?

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: In other words, there are reasonable provisions why you cannot sell your brother one.

Student: (Inaudible.)

Strauss: He has given his consideration, but he does not have the old scheme of Plato and the Laws.

I do not know with what right he says Harrington is a theorist of the bourgeois society. That is not quite clear.

Lecture XVI  
Seminar on Hobbes: February , 1964

(The tape for the first half of this lecture was inaudible.)

Strauss: Exactly. These two groups live on different planets and therefore the issue is never faced; that's one way of getting rid of difficulty--a good separation of labor.

Student: (Inaudible) . . . Locke.

Strauss: My explanation is this. Unlimited acquisition of capital, let us say, is morally good because it contributes to the well-being of everybody. Doesn't he bring this out?

Student: I think this is the reason why he attributes this presumption to Locke. That the increase in the whole product will eventually be distributed.

Strauss: In other words, the day laborer in England is better off than the king of savages is quoted by Locke, but it is not sufficiently emphasized because the moral justification of (inaudible) is (inaudible), that noone has the right to complain. The man who cannot acquire by his labor land nevertheless has a higher standard of living then he would have if he were still in . . .

Student: (Inaudible).

Strauss: If I had the misfortune to be a marxist, I would simply say no capitalism in the economic stage was really progressive, and these were of course public-spirited and humane men, and yet they could not have foreseen that say around 1820 the fate of a miner in Wales was worse than that of a savage in Pennsylvania in the 17th century. This doesn't follow from the Marxist premise at all. On the contrary, I think an (inaudible) marxist must take this view. Capitalism is progress of course compared with feudalism. A progress which then from a certain moment on is no longer progressive. But it is quite true -- Marx himself with the primary emphasis on accumulation takes then a very sympathetic notion toward feudalism.

Student: It is curious how he does explain the rationality of unlimited aquisiton simply by (inaudible) with what you said about . . .

Strauss: That is the danger in marxism, but also in other doctrines. All historical doctrines, that one thinks by referring to something in the spirit of the times one doesn't have to analyze. Well, think of the many people who have written about Machiavelli and who have said well, Renaissance. Sure, but what is Renaissance? Do they not have the concept of Renaissance partly because they have read Machiavelli, so they truly explain

the same by the same, which is strictly against the rules of explanation. This is always so easy, and one should train oneself never to take this particular kind of easy way out, and simply say . . .

It seems that the overall understanding of the principles of Locke are not affected by the economic determinant. Any reader of the chapter on property would see that such a man cannot have any objection to sanctions. That would follow.

MacPherson quotes this passage without discussing it. When I saw that, I had never paid any attention to it. It is in the second treatise of Civil Government, paragraph 19.

Reader: "And here we have the same difference between the state of nature and the state of war, which (inaudible) . . . "

Strauss: Some men. The pluralism is misleading.

Reader: "(Inaudible . . . )".

Strauss: Now by the way the discussion of the state of nature in relation to the state of war has been very well discussed by Mr. Goldwin in his chapter on (inaudible). I think it is a very good chapter. I reread it again.

"Men living together according to reason . . . is properly the state of nature." The state of nature is a state in which all men actually live rationally, i.e., it is a good state because all men not only possess reason, but exercise it. Now this brings me to a question which has been bothering me for a very long time. It is about the origin of the concept of the state of nature. When does it really turn up for the first time? I do not know, but it surely antedates Hobbes. Say in (inaudible), for example, a scholastic writer, early 17th century, gives a kind of summary of the whole scholastic discussion in his treatise on God. When he speaks of the state of nature, he means the state in which the pagan gods or maybe the muslims, too, everyone except Jews and Christians, are in the state of nature. That of course has nothing to do with the asocial state or a state antedating civil society. The ancient Greeks lived in a state of nature. They did not live under a state of law nor in a state of grace. This is perfectly intelligent, common and clear. But this has nothing to do with Hobbes' state of nature because nature is here understood in contradistinction to (inaudible) and not in contradistinction to society. On the other hand, the other (inaudible) occurred time and again, but I saw by accident in the Lerner-Mardee book on medieval philosophy. (inaudible) translates a few pages from Okam, and Okam speaks of the state of nature in the sense of a pre-governmental state. And Okam quotes in this passage Isador (inaudible), that is about 500 if I remember, but Father (inaudible) makes clear in a footnote that in the text as we have it, Isador does not speak of the state of nature.

Thereupon I began to browse a bit in Thomas, and the discussion of man's original state, state of innocence. I found there again what I knew, that according to Thomas, man never was in the state of nature strictly understood. State of nature understood as a state of pure nature., not corrupted nature. According to the Thomastic doctrine, man was originally in a state of uncorrupted nature and was at the same time crazy, supernatural crazy. So man was never strictly speaking in the state of nature. This is exactly the view which I know from before, when he says in the early part of the Discourse on the Origin of Equality where he says we speak about state of nature as a hypothesis and not for the reasons which we know from the textbooks, but because of the biblical christian tradition. But there was another tradition according to which man was in a state of innocence, and was in the state of pure nature without divine (inaudible).

(The tape is very inaudible at this point.)

If Adam was in a state of such perfection that he had not only the perfection connatural but also supernatural, then if the state achieves by foundation not merely a restoration in the original state if not higher, (inaudible . . . ), and the simple theoretical explanation is that Adam had only the connatural and not supernatural.

There were many people who said that men lived originally like beasts. To some extent Plato even spoke of that. But these people of course never spoke of the state of nature. Hobbes says that we accept the state of nature as the original state of man and as the worst state in which man could live.

Man's original state was a state in which men lived together in a perfectly rational manner, i.e., according to the perfection of human nature. I'm sure this view has a sequel in the Middle Ages.

We see the term 'state of nature' as making its entrance into political philosophy in Hobbes and we must see the society as it was in order to make it as clear as we can the peculiarities of Hobbes' teaching. What I have said about the subject is surely not sufficient but I believe ordinarily the question is simply disregarded.

I have read for example occasionally a remark among many authors that the state of nature is of course a very old thing and very common, (inaudible), and the men had either the decency or the nerve to leave it out and not a word about the state of nature. Who can develop this whole doctrine of the law of nature without even referring to the state of nature? This is by the way also of some interest for the understanding of Locke, on page 128, paragraph 15.

Reader: "To those that say there were never (inaudible) state of nature, I will not (inaudible . . . )."

Strauss: This is a passage of capital importance for the understanding of Locke. Here he says state of nature, of course state of nature. But what he does very rarely, and I think the only case where he explicitly deviates -- you know, that is part of his (inaudible), quoting Hooker all the time and Hobbes never. And the impression which we get from that is that he belongs to the very respectable Hookerian tradition. Here is the only passage where he speaks of a deviation which seems to be minor, namely, Hooker had said there were sometimes some men in the state of nature, and Locke says all men are naturally in the state of nature.

So if you read not only the quotation here, but read the whole context, you can see Locke and Hooker never said that any men were in the state of nature. He says there were men who were not yet subject to government. And this is the point. This seemingly trivial deviation is absolutely crucial and shows the abyss separating Locke from Hooker.

To mention only one point which is closely connected with that-- he says in paragraph 13, the beginning -- "To this strange doctrine, (inaudible) state of nature, everyone has the executive power of the law of nature." Here he does not refer to Hooker, but he admits that this is a strange doctrine. Strange means of course novel. Now what is the novelty? In the state of nature everyone has the executive power of the law of nature. What does it mean? Man is by nature without any human establishment the judge of crimes or sins. Why is that so? Because if it were not so, the law of nature would be in vain. There must be an executive power.

The traditional view is that God much more has power in the state of nature. The law of nature would not be a law if there were not a human agency taking care of its execution. A radical change of orientation, and Locke knew this very well. The sound historical procedure is to take this reference to Hooker very seriously, and see where Locke explicitly deviates.

In other words, to take this explicit statement about originality and think about it. Then one reaches the conclusion that all these differences amount fundamentally to the Hobbian radical differences, obvious differences.

MacPherson does not go into these at all because they do not contribute in any way to the analysis of bourgeois society narrowly conceived. In the broader sense, for a fuller understanding of these modern developments, these things are of course as important as the purely social things. The whole notion of conquest of nature, the inventions, and this kind of thing is as important as the class differences.

To summarize my point, MacPherson simply took too narrow a view of the issue, and this is due to the fact that he does not stick sufficiently to the text of it. In the property chapter, of which



one can say is the most unusual chapter in the whole work, but there Locke does not say a word to the effect that he differs from the tradition. He silently replaces the traditional natural law teaching regarding property by a revolutionary natural law teaching, but here in the first chapter he intimates that there are some differences between his natural law teaching and the traditional natural law teaching.

So the general rule is that one must really not make arbitrary selections; one really must read the whole; sometimes that is very boring, but you have to consider the context in which it occurred, however uninteresting the context may be to you at the beginning.

Now to say on e more word about this remark about Hobbes on Locke (inaudible . . . ). I think MacPherson does not do justice to Locke. Locke does not mean that the capitalist morality is not covetousness, because it is not hoarding, but beneficent. But he means of course also that what is meant by the name of covetousness as a tool is worthy and not bad. Not good morally, but good socially. Formula: private vice, public benefit. Locke was probably covetousness. He was very much concerned with the private investment of his money and he had quite a bit of it. But Hobbes was absolutely free from covetousness, and I'm sure that for one moment Locke did not look down on Hobbes because Hobbes was a bad investor.